

Hafa Adai!

New director takes reins of Yonsei Academy. **PAGE 5**

Kilili underscores importance of renewing Compacts. **PAGE 5**

\$1

# Saipan Tribune

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**'Yutu prepared us for Mawar'**

By **CHRYSTAL MARINO**  
[chrystal\\_marino@saipantribune.com](mailto:chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com)  
CORRESPONDENT

**YIGO, Guam**—Nearly five years separate Super Typhoon Yutu and Typhoon Mawar in Marianas history, yet three former Saipan residents who live in Guam now are drawing on many hard-earned lessons they learned after Super

See **YUTU** on Page 4

CHRYSTAL MARINO

A car drives through a narrow road of torn-down trees leading to the northern village in Yigo, Guam.

## Star Marianas hikes airfare

» **Airline says move intended to navigate increasing costs and global economic conditions**

**S**tar Marianas Air, the sole interisland airline that connects Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands, will be increasing its airfare starting Aug. 1, 2023.



Christian

See **STAR** on Page 4

### Defense: High court's ruling does not resolve validity of Kingman's contract

By **KIMBERLY B. ESMORES**  
[kimberly\\_esmores@saipantribune.com](mailto:kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com)  
REPORTER

ecutor in his case still does not satisfy the question of validity

See **DEFENSE** on Page 4

The defense team of former governor Ralph DLG Torres says the Supreme Court's ruling that denied the former governor's request to revoke the admission of James Robert Kingman as the special pros-



Kingman

**'TOUCHBACK' COUNTDOWN**  
Number of days left until the "touchback" rule takes effect on Sept. 30, 2023:

**102**



### KING OF THE GRILL

Herman's Bakery general manager Mike Guerrero, along with his son, claimed the King of the Grill title during the 24th Annual Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden over the weekend at the Garapan Fishing Base. **Story on Page 2**

KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

## INSIDE



### BUSINESS

Worksite Labs, a diagnostic laboratory company, opens a branch at the Dededo Pay-Less.

**PAGE 11**



### NATION

Americans celebrate Juneteenth, commemorating the end of slavery after the Civil War.

**PAGE 12**



### WORLD

Russia and Ukraine are suffering high numbers of casualties as Ukraine fights to dislodge Kremlin forces.

**PAGE 13**



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KIMBERLY B. ESMORES

Herman's Bakery general manager Mike Guerrero, along with his son, claimed the King of the Grill title during the 24th annual Taste of the Marianas festival over the weekend at the Garapan Fishing Base.

# Local

## Herman's GM is named King of the Grill at 'Taste'

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Herman's Bakery general manager Mike Guerrero, along with his son, claimed the King of the Grill title during the 24th Annual Taste of the Marianas International Food Festival & Beer Garden over the weekend at the Garapan Fishing Base.

The competition, which featured eight groups consisting of professional chefs and amateur grillers, kicked off with a People's Choice steak cookoff, followed by the King of the Grill barbecue ribs cookoff.

The participants of the competition were Juan Ogarto, Guerrero, Alexander Standish, Samson Tan, Sally Ramos, Emmanuel Erediano, Bran Castro, and Suaad Younis San Nicolas.

After over two hours of grilling the chefs presented their ribs to the panel of judges for a blind taste test and, after much deliberation, they unanimously deemed Guerrero's ribs the best out of the bunch.

The first runner up in the King of the Grill competition was Suaad Younis San Nicolas, followed closely by Alexander Standish who completed the top three.

For the People's Choice competition, Juan Ogarto's steaks came out on top despite being the only group without a "conventional" grill. Following Ogarto in second place was Alexander Standish followed by Bran Castro, who officially completed the top three for the People's Choice competition.

Following the competition, Guerrero was ecstatic to be named this year's King of the

Grill, but what made the win even more special was the fact that he won the title with his son, Tyler Guerrero, on the eve of Father's Day.

"My boy did a good job! He helped me the night before and on the morning before the competition, just preparing the meat. He did a great job assisting me today," he said.

When asked what kind of spin he put on his award-winning ribs, Guerrero said he and his son decided to stick with a simple Southern-style rib featuring an apple theme.

"We just made a traditional smoked, Southern-style rib with an apple barbecue sauce and we had an apple coleslaw and garlic confit mashed potatoes. We smoked our ribs with apple wood, and we stuck with the apple theme throughout the entire competition," he said.

Guerrero stated he will be back next year to defend his title.

Saipan Tribune also managed to speak with a group of friends who were new to the island and participated in the People's Choice as judges. According to the group, the competition was a first for them and it was a great experience.

"It was fun to chug down a couple of beers, have as much steak as you want, and just have a great time. Definitely glad we participated," they said.

The King of the Grill competition has been a Taste of the Marianas staple event since 2015.

This year's contest was sponsored by Budweiser and *Marianas Variety*.

## Senate chief pushes Better Business Bureau

Senate President Edith E. DeLeon Guerrero (D-Saipan) has introduced a bill that seeks to establish a Better Business Division within the Department of Commerce.

DeLeon Guerrero stated in Senate Bill 23-38 that the proposed bureau can issue business reliability reports, strengthen fraud prevention, deal with complaints and dispute violations, push for truth-in-advertising, and carry out consumer and business education.

She underscored the need to establish an entity within the CNMI government to protect consumers against unfair, misleading, or fraudulent advertisement and selling practices.

The Senate president stated in the bill that the Division of

Better Business Bureau may investigate and set standards for business practices, receive complaints of improper practices, and conduct educational campaigns, alerting the public to methods of deceit and fraud in advertising and selling.

The bureau shall be headed by a director appointed by the Commerce secretary.

Among the bureau's duties and responsibilities is to scrutinize the language of advertisements, write-ups, and documentation illustrating the description of products or services offered by businesses, companies, and corporations.



DeLeon Guerrero

Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

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# ‘MVA still faces many challenges for its Korea and Japan markets’

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Looking ahead to fiscal year 2024 and beyond in terms of marketing, the CNMI still faces a number of challenges, including the currency exchange rates, for Korea and Japan tourism markets, according to Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Christopher A. Concepcion.

Speaking at the House Ways and Means Committee hearing last Wednesday on MVA’s proposed budget for 2024, Concepcion noted that the strong dollar and exchange rates for both the Japanese yen and Korean won are working against the CNMI right now.

He said the high value of the U.S. dollar is making destinations like the CNMI much less attractive for visitors from Korea and Japan as they can get more for their money elsewhere in Asia.

He said interest rates in Korea are up and their airlines operating cost is getting higher.

Realistically, Concepcion said, the MVA’s budget has always been very low compared to competing destinations, forcing them to be very strategic with every dollar that they have.

“For example, Hawaii. The Hawaii Tourism Industry recently spent over \$62 million to market just to the West Coast of the United States. That doesn’t even count their budget for Japan or elsewhere in the world,” he said.

For another, the Guam Visitors Authority has requested \$29 million from their government for the next fiscal year.

“So we have major challenges in with our competing destinations,” he said.

MVA’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2024 is just \$12.5 million. In fiscal year 2018, or pre-Super Typhoon Yutu and the COVID-19 pandemic, the MVA’s budget was at \$15.7 million.

For the Japan market, Concepcion said the CNMI faces the same challenge with the exchange rate.

He pointed out that the Japanese are not traveling outbound in the numbers that everybody in the world hopes.

“That is a more challenge for us. There really is still a real fear of COVID in Japan, and families with children and seniors are very cautious about traveling overseas,” the managing director said.

For the next fiscal year, Concepcion said, they will continue to commit an overwhelming majority of their budget to marketing and promotions.

He reiterated that they always promote all of the islands in the Marianas as a multi-island destination.

Concepcion said if the CNMI can regain more air seats between the islands, more investment and destination enhancement, more collaboration with local operators for more optional tours and

activities, they will see more interisland travels. “So, in other words, there really needs to be further development of interisland capacity, overall,” the MVA official said.

He said they have and will continue to target niche markets interested in diving, eco-tourism, memorial services and more. He said each island has its own unique appeal that MVA highlights, like with the recent outdoor electronic signboards advertising in Seoul and Busan, Korea late last year.

The outdoor electronic signboard ads in Seoul and Busan present the beauty of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota and encourage people to travel to the Marianas.

Concepcion said their outdoor ads and digital ads placed in the fourth quarter in 2022 increased traffic on MVA’s website by almost 2,000%.

“So it was a very successful program,” he said.

He underscored the importance of destination enhancement for the three islands for fiscal year 2024 as he also discussed their plans and projects for the islands.

Concepcion said the MVA, with its expertise in the travel industry, is the best entity to decide how those limited funds are used strategically and efficiently under these proposed programs and activities so that they have a clear and direct benefit for the tourism industry.



Concepcion

## JKPL offers free summer reading program

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library’s Bookmobile is inviting the Saipan community to an “All Together Now” Summer Reading Adventure starting June 28, 2023. Team JKPL’s Bookmobile encourages everyone—infants, toddlers, and preschoolers, to children, teens and adults—to accomplish reading goals and continue learning throughout the summer. The Bookmobile will be conducting JKPL’s free Summer Reading Program from 9:30am to 11:30am at the following sites:

- Tanapag Youth Center from June 28 to June 30, 2023
- Kagman Community Center from July 5 to July 7, 2023
- Carolinian Utt/ Pavilion (Garapan) from July 12 to July 14, 2023
- Fernando M. Benavente Memorial Library (San Antonio) from July 19 to July 21, 2023

The public is invited to register for the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library’s Bookmobile

Summer Reading Program for the Early Literacy, Children, Teens, and Adult and the JKPL Teen and Adult program during library hours of operation from May 24, 2023 to June 23, 2023. You will need to bring your library card and fill out a registration at one of our designated computer workstations in the Children’s Library and the Information Technology Center.


The Bookmobile will also be providing free meals for registered participants in the Early Literacy, Children, and Teen Program in partnership with the CNMI Public School System. Space is limited and will be offered to those on a first registered, first served basis. Although our program is open to everyone, we are prioritizing underserved children in our community. Valid library card is required.

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library has provided a free summer reading program to the CNMI community for more

than 20 years. Our theme this year, “All Together Now”, invites you to explore together in our community with activities, programs, and all kinds of books. By joining the fun, you’ll earn prizes, and connect with others through the power of stories.

JKPL is a member of the Collaborative Summer Library Program and partners with various community donors, sponsors, and agencies (private/public) to promote literacy during summer.

Studies have shown that during the summer, children and teens who aren’t reading or participating in other learning activities can lose up to two months of academic skills achieved during the school year. Participating in the Summer Reading program can help students avoid the “summer slide.” Additionally, children who see their parents and other adults in their lives reading tend to read more and build healthy reading habits. (PR)



**NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION (NMHC)**  
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514  
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.nmhc.gov.net

## PUBLIC NOTICE

06/13/2023  
This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD funds.

### NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND NOTICE OF INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands  
Northern Marianas Housing Corporation  
Saipan MP, 96950  
Telephone(s): (670)234-9447/6866

These notices shall satisfy the above-cited two separate but related procedural notification requirements.

#### REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS

On or after June 29, 2023, the *Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands* will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Washington D.C., for the release of Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) Supplemental Appropriations for Disaster Relief Act, 2019 P.L. 116-20, enacted on January 27, 2020, announced via Federal Register Notice, to undertake the following activity and purposes in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:

Project/Activity Type	Purpose	Location	Total Project Cost
Sunset Rentals, Fina Sisu  • The “Sunset Rentals” project proposes to build two (2) units, consisting of three-bedrooms each.	Affordable Rental Housing	Fina Sisu, Saipan	Approximately \$500,000.00 of CDBG-DR funds; no other funds are to be used

#### FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has determined that the above-listed project will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) website at [www.nmhc.gov.net](http://www.nmhc.gov.net) or NMHC Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery (CDBG-DR) website at [www.cnmi-cdbgdrr.com](http://www.cnmi-cdbgdrr.com); or on file at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan or NMHC CDBG-DR Office in Beach Road, Chalan Laulau, Saipan, examined during regular work hours, Monday through Friday except CNMI Holidays, from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Any individual, group, or agency may submit written comments on the ERR to Northern Marianas Housing Corporation. You may submit comments to the following options: via mail to P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950; direct delivery to the central office in Garapan, Saipan or drop-box located in front of the building; and via email at [officemanager@nmhc.gov.net](mailto:officemanager@nmhc.gov.net). All comments received by **June 28, 2023, 4:30 p.m.** will be considered by the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to authorizing the submission of a request for release of funds. Comments should specify which Notice they are addressing.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CERTIFICATION

The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands certifies to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Washington D.C. that the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Governor Arnold I. Palacios consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process, and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Washington D.C. approval of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 and related laws and authorities, and allows the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands to use Program Funds.

#### OBJECTIONS TO RELEASE OF FUNDS

The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Washington D.C will accept objections to its release of fund and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands certification for a period of **fifteen days** following the anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if they are on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands; (b) the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by HUD regulations at 24 CFR part 58; (c) the grant recipient or other participants in the development process have committed funds, incurred costs or undertaken activities not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of a release of funds by U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures (24 CFR Part 58, Sec. 58.76) and shall be addressed to Ms. Tennille Smith Parker, DRSI Division Director, HUD, via email at [Tennille.S.Parker@hud.gov](mailto:Tennille.S.Parker@hud.gov) or via telephone (202)402-4649. Potential objectors should contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

/s/  
**Arnold I. Palacios**  
Governor of the CNMI



# 'Some Aging Center rooms not being used to save power'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie.delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The Office on Aging has been implementing such a massive cost-cutting regimen on their utilities costs on Saipan such that most of the rooms at the *Man'amko* Center in Garapan are not being used right now.

That's according to Office on Aging director Walter Manglona last Friday, speaking during the House Ways and Means Committee budget hearing for the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs' proposed 2024 budget.

Manglona said he is sure that the respective Office on Aging resident directors on Tinian and Rota are implementing the same cost-cutting measures.

With most rooms at the *Man'amko* Center not being utilized right now, they only get used during typhoons as a shelter, he said. Those unused rooms include

the exercise room, music room, and the arts and crafts room.

"We've actually closed most of the rooms down so that we can help save costs on utilities," Manglona said.

He said the seniors citizens who go to the *Man'amko* Center are pretty much packed in the congregation area.

Now they are trying to figure out how they can schedule and allow the *man'amko* to do their activities within the same confines of the dining area so that they can continue to save on utility costs.

He said they have been applying for various grants, in addition to their current grants from the Administration for Community Living. Manglona said a lot of these funds are specifically earmarked for services.

While they have been doing major cost-cutting on their ends, he said they're trying their best not to shortchange the senior citizens.

The director said he just finished

their state plan for the next four years and the final draft is now being routed for review. He said many great programs and activities are in that state plan.

Manglona pointed out that there are some senior citizens who don't have the means to cut their grass in their home and that they used to go out there and cut it for them. He said during typhoon when some seniors don't have families to cover up the windows, their staff would go out there or buy the plywood to cover it for them.

"We need to get employees. We need to get equipment. We need to get fuel. We need to get all these things to go out there, not just for bush cutting but to help clean if they don't have anybody else to go in there and clean their house," the director said.

Manglona said it hurts his heart to see the proposed budget that they have to work with.

"I need full money," said Man-

glona, adding that for meals alone they are looking at over \$468,000 for the entire year, which is just their budget for Saipan. The Office on Aging on Saipan has a population of over 60 seniors that come in daily.

"We are not asking for more. We're just asking for help," the director said.

He said he understands where the CNMI is economically, that the Commonwealth is recovering and going through a lot.

Manglona said through partnership, proper planning, cost cutting, and a little funding from the local government, they can meet their goal for the *man'amko*.

## YUTU

From Page 1

Typhoon Yutu tore into the CNMI in 2018 as a Category 5 storm.

For Liana Depich Louis, Tani-sha Mori, and Sherese Saures Apat, they all agreed that Typhoon Mawar's damage to their homes was only partial compared to the damage to their Saipan homes after Yutu. Typhoon Mawar passed through Guam last May 24 as a Category 4 hurricane.

Each of these women were on Saipan when Yutu slammed into the Marianas with 130 miles-per-hour winds in October 2018, devastating their homes. Yutu has since become known as the strongest typhoon ever recorded to hit the CNMI.

Shortly after Yutu hit, Apat relocated to Guam where she had been staying for the past five years. When describing her six hours during Typhoon Mawar last May 24, Apat shared that it was "crazy, very crazy. ...All we were hearing were the rushing wind against our windows, tin rattling, and trees just falling, you know..."

Apat shared that because of the way her house was situated, her home in Mangilao was a bit more sheltered than the others and didn't get too hard of a beating by the wind.

"We were praising God through the storm. ...We were believing God that we'll get through the storm, and make it out safely and we did," Apat said. "Thank God that our roof didn't fly off, and our house didn't get flooded, so yeah, all the glory to God for keeping us safe."

With the northern part of Guam taking the most damage from the storm, several residents in the area are still awaiting electricity, even as first responders and volunteers continue working tirelessly on repairs. Among the residents who remain without power are Louis and Mori, who both reside in the Yigo area.

Mori explained that her house was only partially damaged after Mawar hit Guam, but she was glad that she wasn't alone and had gone to a safe place to wait out the storm. But still, in comparison to Yutu, Mori said the damage was not too bad, and remarked how even with the extensive amount of damage on the island, Guam's recovery process is much faster than Saipan's was.

"I was not ready for Typhoon

Yutu, and we weren't prepared for it. ...For Mawar we were more prepared," Mori said.

Louis, whose home is in the same area as Mori's, described her six hours of the storm as a dark time. "During those six hours, everything was dark, the wind was really strong. ...Honestly during those times, we were just praying, singing songs of faith, trying to stay positive throughout the whole thing. ... We didn't know how bad the damage would be on the outside, but we knew that in our home we would be okay."

Louis said she hadn't expected it to be too strong and was just trying to stay positive. At one point, Louis and her husband had to push things against their door to prevent it from blowing open and, after a while, retreated with her dogs into their bathroom to wait out the storm.

"It was hot, but we've been through worse," she said. "I'd say Typhoon Yutu was worse, in a sense that I actually lost my home. Saipan wasn't ready for the storm. We were out of power for about five months, so comparing that situation to the one we're currently in right now here in Guam, with a lot of things are going back up..."

Louis feels her experience during Yutu prepared her, especially when taking precautions and planning for a storm. "I think from that experience we learned how to be resilient, so coming here and learning that Mawar was coming, it may've seem to other people that I was overreacting in preparing, but I wasn't. I was more prepared, so when everything did shut down, we had what we needed to get through. ...So we learned from experience. ...I guess Guam was surprised, a lot of people weren't ready. I'd overhear people in the stores saying 'Ah, that's just gonna pass by, it's nothing,' but, you know, it's better to be safe than sorry."

Louis said that their home experienced partial damage from the storm, and that they still have no power, so they don't know the exact extent of the damage of appliances in their home, but her family is just grateful for their lives.

She's also grateful for her family on Saipan checking up on her, and their support has encouraged her to keep moving forward. Louis is also so grateful to all the volunteers from Saipan who are in Guam to help repair the damage from the storm.

## DEFENSE

From Page 1

regarding his contract.

Torres' lawyers say the Supreme Court's ruling still does not resolve some of their issues like the validity of Kingman's contract with the Office of the Attorney General.

Another issue that has yet to be resolved, Torres' counsel states, is the issue of whether the OAG even possesses the power to appoint a special prosecutor.

"The Supreme Court's ruling on the pro hac vice reconsideration motion resolved a few unclear issues regarding the pro hac vice admission process. However, the decision does not resolve the issues of the validity of the special prosecutor contract under the Commonwealth procurement regulations or whether the attorney general possesses the power and authority to appoint a special prosecutor, especially when the attorney general has a conflict of interest in the underlying litigation," said the defense.

Torres' defense stated that these issues have now been brought be-

fore the Superior Court and may even be brought before the Supreme Court again.

The defense did acknowledge that the Supreme Court correctly noted that the motion did not accuse James Kingman of any improper conduct. Instead, the motion was based solely on deficiencies associated with the procedure for a pro hac vice admission.

"While the [high] court acknowledged that the pro hac vice application suffered from some procedural deficiencies as Torres asserted, the deficiencies were not deemed material enough to warrant reconsideration of the pro hac vice admission. Most importantly, though, the court ruled that a party in the underlying litigation, like Torres, has standing to object to or contest a pro hac vice application or admission despite the prosecution's argument that Torres lacked standing," said the defense.

In addition, the defense stated that Torres is still pleased with the Supreme Court's decision, specifically the part where they indicated that Torres has standing to challenge the special prosecutor's pro hac vice admission if the special prosecutor en-

gages in improper conduct.

"Equally important, the ruling indicates that a party with standing can challenge a pro hac vice admission if the attorney with a pro hac vice admission engages in misconduct at any time during the period of the pro hac vice admission. This suggests that the conduct and action of an attorney admitted pro hac vice is limited to the scope of the pro hac vice admission. Despite the Supreme Court denying Torres' reconsideration motion, Torres is pleased with the court indicating that he has standing to challenge the special prosecutor's pro hac vice admission if the special prosecutor engages in improper conduct," the defense stated.

The defense team has filed a petition for judicial review with the Superior Court regarding the validity of the special prosecutor's contract. Torres, in his petition, is asking the court to find the contract invalid for noncompliance with the Commonwealth's procurement regulations.

Named as respondents in this petition are the Office of the Attorney General and the Department of Finance.

continued support during these prevailing economic conditions."

Star Marianas assured that the revised fares have been calculated to strike a balance "between sustaining operations and upholding the highest standards of safety and reliability while minimizing the economic impact on the communities served."

The airfare increases will vary based on specific routes, according to Star Marianas. It says it remains committed to transparency and passengers are encouraged to visit the company's website (<https://www.starmarianasair.com>) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/StarMarianasAir/>) for up-to-date and accurate fare information.

"We appreciate everyone's understanding and cooperation as we navigate through these chal-

lenging economic times together," said Shaun Christian, president of Star Marianas Air. "Star Marianas Air remains dedicated to serving our customers with the highest level of service while adapting to the changing economic landscape. We are confident that these fare adjustments will help us continue delivering a reliable and enjoyable travel experience."

"Star Marianas Air reassures customers that its ongoing commitment to exceptional reliability, on-time departure and providing a safe and secure environment during air travel remains unchanged. These fare adjustments are crucial to sustaining the company's commitment to excellence and ensuring long-term operational stability," the Star Marianas Air news release added. (PR)

## STAR

From Page 1

According to a news release yesterday announcing the impending price adjustments, this move is in response to the significant surge in inflation rates affecting the global economy, including the airline sector.

"Rising costs of fuel, labor, spare parts, shipping, and operational expenses have necessitated this adjustment to ensure the sustainability of operations and maintain the reliability of service," the airline's news release stated. "Understanding the potential challenges that price changes may pose for customers, Star Marianas Air greatly appreciates their understanding and



## AT INDO-PACIFIC TASK FORCE'S INAUGURAL MEETING

## Kilili underscores importance of renewing Compacts

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**  
ferdie\_delatorre@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources' Indo-Pacific Task Force that is co-chaired by Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) and Rep. Amata Radewagen (R-American Samoa) talked about the importance of renewing the Compacts of Free Association with the CNMI's neighboring island nations of Palau, the Marshall Islands, and Micronesia during their inaugural meeting Wednesday.

In his opening statement at the meeting, Sablan stressed the need to respect the CNMI's relationships with these Freely Associated States by renewing—and increasing—the financial provisions of the current Compacts.

The delegate stated in his e-kilili newsletter over the weekend that these Compacts agreements give the United States responsibility for the defense of the Freely Associated States and exclusive access to strategically important areas of the Pacific.

"We must, however, nurture the relationship with our Pacific ally neighbors, never take them for granted, by swiftly passing the Compact renewal agreements as they are transmitted to Congress by the administration," Sablan said.

The bipartisan Indo-Pacific Task Force was recently formed to combat the rising influence of the People's Republic of China in the U.S. territories and Freely Associated States in the Indo-Pacific region.

U.S. territories in the Pa-



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Delegate Aumua Amata Radewagen (R-A. Samoa) and Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) flank Delegate Jim Moylan (R-Guam).

States of Micronesia.

The Compact Agreements refer to the treaties the United

States signed with the Freely Associated States, which grants the U.S. certain privileges and

access to these countries, in exchange for defense arrangements, among others benefits.

## New director takes reins of Yonsei Academy; school offers expanded instrument options

Yonsei Academy, the renowned music institution on Saipan, announced yesterday the appointment of Minsoo Joe as the new director and Choi Somin as the piano instructor, allowing the school to now offer lessons for various instruments beyond the piano.

Minsoo brings a wealth of expertise to the academy, with a bachelor's degree in Orchestral Studies from Chungnam National University, a master's degree in Music Education from the Graduate School of Chungnam National University, and experience as a conductor for the instrumental section at the Seongmo Elementary School.

Choi contributes her expertise and artistic flair to Yonsei Academy as an accomplished piano instructor. With a strong background in classical piano and a passion for fostering creativity, Choi is eager to guide students on their musical journey, helping them unlock their full potential and achieve their dreams.

To promote musical diversity and cultivate a new generation of talented musicians, Yonsei Academy now offers lessons in playing the flute, violin, saxophone, and clarinet. This expansion allows students to discover their passion for different instruments and receive a comprehensive musical education.

Minsoo is excited about joining Yonsei Academy and his commitment to upholding its esteemed reputation. His extensive experience in the field of music education and his previous work as a conductor for the instrumental section at Seongmo Elementary School showcases his dedication to nurturing young talents. He strives to create a supportive and inspiring environment for



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Besides piano lessons, Yonsei Academy now offers lessons in playing the flute, violin, saxophone, and clarinet.

students to grow and excel.

Yonsei Academy welcomes music enthusiasts of all ages and skill levels to explore the expanded range of instrument options. Whether you are a beginner or an advanced player, the academy provides personalized instruction tailored to individual needs and goals.

Both Minsoo and Choi are

building on the rich legacy of guidance under school-teacher Yun Jihye and aim to further enhance the musical landscape of Saipan with their fresh perspectives and diverse educational programs.

Under the new leadership and the inclusion of additional instruments, Yonsei Academy is poised to become the pre-

mier destination for music education on the island. Students can look forward to a vibrant and diverse learning experience that ignites their passion for music and paves the way for future success.

For more information about Yonsei Academy's programs and enrollment, please call 670-783-8163. (PR)



## Commonwealth Utilities Corporation



## JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

JVA No. 23-083

Opening Date: Wednesday, June 7, 2023

Closing Date: Wednesday, June 21, 2023

**POSITION TITLE:**  
**DEPARTMENT:**  
**LOCATION:**  
**ANNUAL SALARY:**  
**CONTRACT:**  
**POSITION(S):**

**Trades Assistant**  
**Water Division**  
**Saipan, Northern Marianas Islands, USA**  
**\$16,742.00 to \$22,602.00 per annum, non-Exempt**  
**Not Contracted**  
**Two (2)**

The incumbent will be under the overall supervision of the Drinking Water & Wastewater Division Manager or his/her designee. This class specification represents only the core areas of responsibilities; specific position assignments will vary depending on the needs of the Wastewater Division.

**Duties:**

- Assists with installations, repairs and general maintenance in assigned service area; operates motorized vehicles, equipment machinery, and hand and power tools.
- Performs routine and preventative maintenance on equipment, vehicles, systems and/or infrastructure; performs basic inspections; and conducts basic troubleshooting of issues.
- Responds to trouble calls as needed.
- Prepares job site for work including gathering and setting up materials and supplies, and setting work safety barriers for protection and to direct traffic flow away from work site.
- Gathers, cleans and returns equipment, materials and supplies used.
- Cleans and maintains work site after project or repair work is complete.
- Monitors equipment; takes readings and collects data; documents equipment readings; prepares and submits data and work reports.
- Performs inventory spot checks to ensure adequate materials and supplies are available for daily maintenance activities.
- Performing daily well and pump station facility maintenance, cleaning and monitoring;
- Assisting plumbing and chlorine maintenance crew;
- Utilizing digging equipment for locating and repairing leaks;
- Repairing and securing pressure reducer valves, main valves, service lines and laterals, and booster pumps;
- Assisting with meter installation and repair;
- Collecting water samples.
- Must be able to lift objects weighing at 40 lbs. or more.
- Performs other duties of a similar nature and level as assigned.

**Minimum Requirements:**

**Education:** High School Diploma, General Education Diploma, or Adult Basic Education.  
**Knowledge of:** Customer service principles; Basic mathematical concepts; Safety procedures and safe work practices; Modern office technology.  
**Skills in:** Providing customer service; Reading maps and drawings; Operating heavy and light equipment machinery, hand and power tools required of assigned area; Adhering to safety procedures and safe work practices; Prioritizing tasks and managing time for efficiency; Identifying issues and solving problems; Providing attention to detail; Taking equipment readings and recording data; Maintaining activity logs and reports; Utilizing a computer and relevant software applications; Utilizing communication and interpersonal skills as applied to interaction with coworkers, supervisor, the general public, and others to sufficiently exchange or convey information and to receive work direction.

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**SUBMISSION DATE: JULY 13, 2023 TIME: 09:00 A.M.**

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/S/ **TRACY B. NORITA**  
SECRETARY OF FINANCE

/S/ **BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.**  
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS



# Drone pilot operator training for first responders

By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Drones are set to take flight in the CNMI soon and may aid first responders after a drone pilot operator training

with first responders today, June 20, until June 26, from 8am to 4pm at the Northern Marianas Technical Institute Campus in Lower Base. The six-day course will encompass different aspects

of drone flight practical training, with Day 1 talking about rules and regulations and night operations training. Day 2 is a lecture about the National Airspace System; Day 3 consists of reading sec-

tional charts; Day 4 is about airport operations and weather and micrometeorology; Day 5 is on drone flight operations; and Day 6 are practice tests and booking for the drone flying exam. The training will be done by Bella Wings Aviation, or

BWA, based in Guam. Its co-founder and president is Charlie Hermosa. BWA is an unmanned aerial vehicle company focused on providing virtual inspection in construction engineering, package delivery, light show, video production,

search and rescue, manufacturing and training. BWA has taken an educational perspective to introduce and train new Part 107 pilots. The Part 107 license is a certification issued by the Federal Aviation Administration that allows drone pilots to operate a broad spectrum of aerial missions in commercial and government applications.

## Man pleads guilty to assault

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES  
kimberly\_esmores@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

A man has pleaded guilty to one count of assault and disturbing the peace and was sentenced to a one-year imprisonment. Trent James Mendiola, 36, a repeat offender who was previously arrested on charges of assault and disturbing the peace, has pleaded guilty before Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo following a change of plea hearing. However, of his imprisonment term of one year, Mendiola is only required to serve six months as the other six months was suspended. Mendiola was also given credit for 98 days of time served. The defendant is set to be released from Department of Corrections on Aug. 30, 2023, and will be placed on

supervised probation for two years. Mendiola was also ordered to pay a \$240 probation fee, a fine of \$150 and court costs of \$25. The defendant was also ordered to perform 40 hours of community service and write an apology letter to the victim within 30 days of the order. According to court documents, police arrested Mendiola following a preliminary investigation into a disturbance report in Chalan Kanoa back in March. On March 3, police investigators that the door to the victim's room in Chalan Kanoa had multiple holes and dents. In an interview with investigators, the victim said that on the afternoon of March 2, she had somebody over when she heard a knock on her bedroom door. The knocker later identified himself as Mendiola and de-

manded that the victim open the door for him. Mendiola, who allegedly tried to force himself into the apartment, asked the victim if there was anyone over, to which she replied yes. This caused Mendiola to kick the door open. The other woman with the victim jumped off the second-floor balcony and ran away. Mendiola, in a fit of rage, found an empty liquor bottle and allegedly threw it at the victim, missing her by a few inches. The victim said she managed to call the police sometime during the altercation, who arrived just in time to get Mendiola out of the apartment. Police learned that Mendiola is on probation for previous cases involving domestic violence, resisting arrest, assault and battery, and unlawful contact. There is a court order that directs him to stay away from the victim.

## 'Pistang Pinoy' celebrates 125 years of PH independence



By LEIGH GASES  
leigh\_gases@saipantribune.com  
REPORTER

Some members and volunteers of the United Filipino Organization pose for a photo during the Pistang Pinoy celebration of the 125th Philippine Independence Day on Sunday at the Marianas Business Plaza.

The CNMI's Filipino community held a belated celebration of 125 years of Philippine independence last Sunday at the Marianas Business Plaza. As it was also Father's Day, families were seen out and about enjoying the food vendors and entertainment of the festivities. The whole-day event featured games, entertainment, food, raffle drawings, and a contest for Father & Son look alike, in celebration of Father's Day.

There was also an air-soft shooting booth manned by the Saipan Tactical Airsoft Group or STAG. United Filipino Organizations president Birhen Martinez said the occasion had a lot of vendors. "Right now, it's lunch time so there's not much people because they might be celebrating Father's Day somewhere else, but we expect more people to come later in the day. Later in the day is also when the highlights of our events will happen." She added, "We Filipinos are in a foreign land. Most Filipinos here on Saipan don't go home every year. So, we wanted to bring back Filipino culture here once a year. You get to meet a lot of Filipinos in the community that you don't often see every day, so it's a good gathering for the Filipino community and also for the other locals because we want to showcase the Filipino culture." This year's theme for Philippine Independence Day, which was last June 12, is "Kalayaan, Kasaysayan, at



Event goers flock to the food vendors and air-soft shooting booth manned by the Saipan Tactical Airsoft Group or STAG yesterday during the Pistang Pinoy celebration of the 125th Philippine Independence Day on Sunday at the Marianas Business Plaza.



People are seen watching the entertainment of the Pistang Pinoy celebration of the 125th Philippine Independence Day on Sunday at the Marianas Business Plaza.

Kinabukasan" ("Freedom, History, and Future"). The traditional Philippine flag-raising was held last June 12 and was attended by members of the Filipino community, Philippine Consul to Guam Ferdinand P. Flores, Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang at the Marianas High School Gymnasium. RNV Construction, IT&E and Tan Siu Lin Foundation are Pistang Pinoy 2023's main sponsors. UFO also thanked the Marianas Business Plaza for their support and use of their venue.

### DELTA MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (SAIPAN) Shell Gasoline Service Stations Has an opening for an Auditor/Accounting Staff

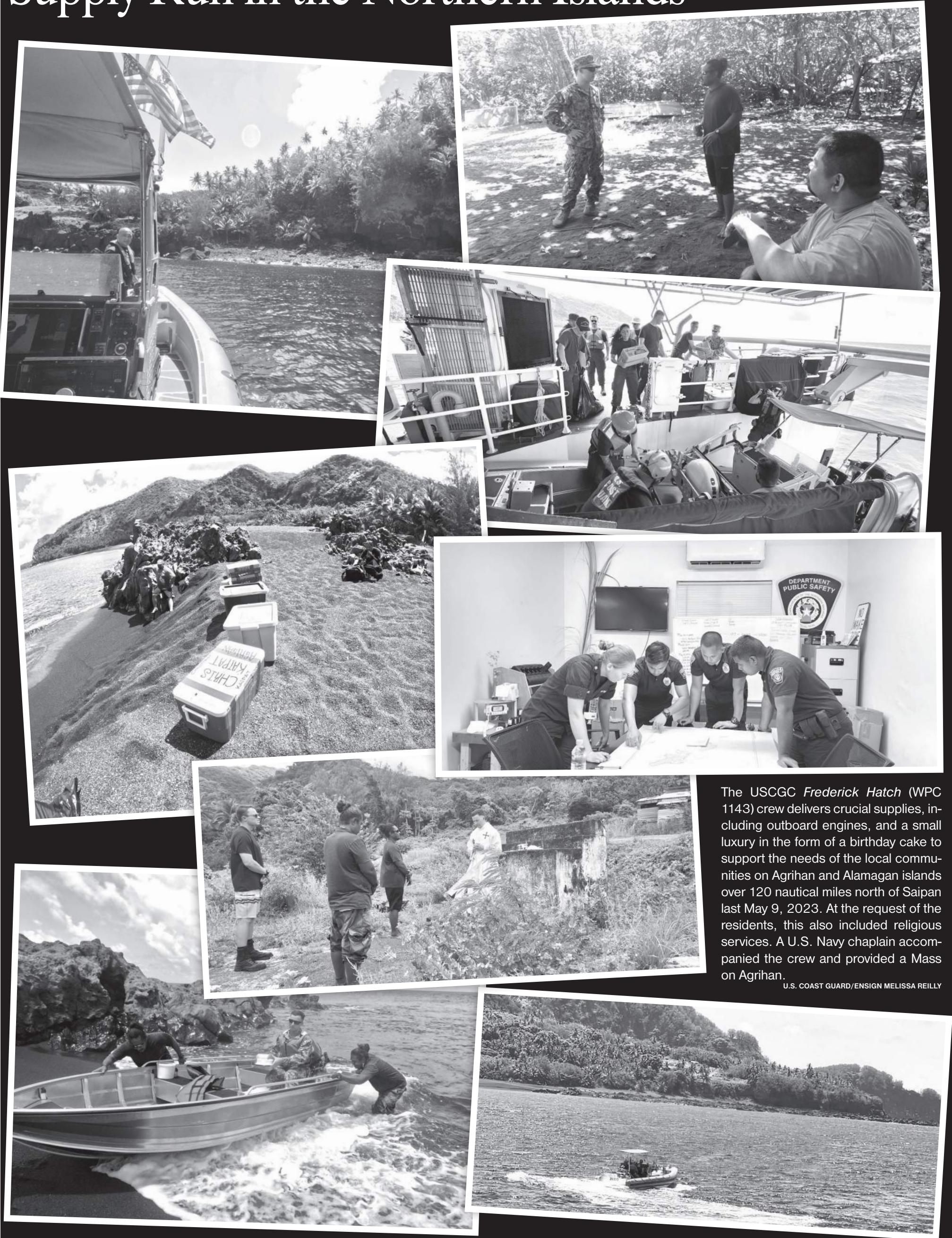
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- Responsible for accurate auditing of daily sales reports for service stations
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- Can work on a fast paced environment.
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- We will train the right person
- On island reference & police clearance required.

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and deltaspn@pticom.com



# Supply Run in the Northern Islands



The USCGC *Frederick Hatch* (WPC 1143) crew delivers crucial supplies, including outboard engines, and a small luxury in the form of a birthday cake to support the needs of the local communities on Agrihan and Alamagan islands over 120 nautical miles north of Saipan last May 9, 2023. At the request of the residents, this also included religious services. A U.S. Navy chaplain accompanied the crew and provided a Mass on Agrihan.

U.S. COAST GUARD/ENSIGN MELISSA REILLY



# Opinion

Hafa Adair!

## Saipan Tribune

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### EDITORIAL

## The Federal Reserve pauses interest rate hikes, a caution that should continue

After 10 consecutive interest rate hikes meant to squeeze down inflation, the Federal Reserve on Wednesday held steady at a benchmark rate of between 5 and 5.25%, indicating that the aggressive intervention has yielded results and the central bank is easing off. Let's hope this pattern holds, because the consequences of too much harsh medicine could be more dire than the ailment.

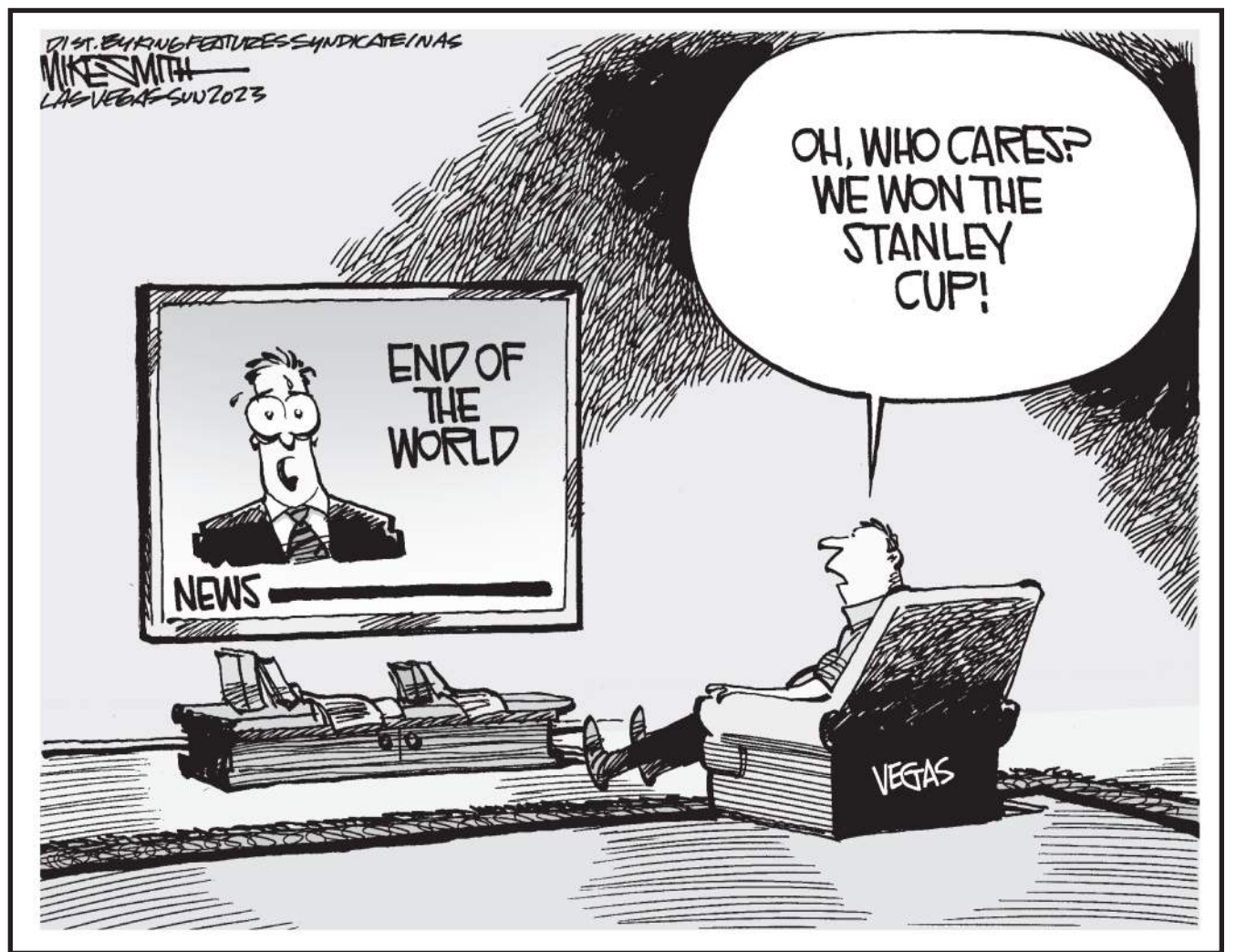
There are plenty of people who point out, correctly, that the current interest rates are still far below historical benchmarks and are coming after years of rates set effectively at the "free money" mark. Yet the question isn't only what the rates are, but how dramatically they shift in how short of a time period, and on that front the Fed's latest actions are eye-popping, if not unprecedented.

Of course, these actions were taken to tamp down on runaway inflation. The proof is in the pudding now that inflation is cooling off and the indicators are looking good, though perhaps much of that has to do with supply chain issues outside of the Fed's control. Nonetheless, we actually do seem headed for that fabled soft landing, with the hikes having so far not led to signs of an incoming recession.

There have been collateral consequences—including the largest bank collapses since 2008—and difficulties with people trying to finance home purchases, and any rise in unemployment rates brings about pain, but so far those consequences haven't risked completely spiraling out of control. So why push our luck? The majority of Fed policymakers indicated that they expected to see some two additional quarter-point increases this year, though that's not a certainty.

The ever-cautious Chair Jay Powell indicated that the Fed is dissatisfied with inflation's response to his bank's efforts so far, and would do "whatever it takes," but most observers expect the downward trend to continue and this to essentially be a bluff. If things are going in the right direction, let's hope it is, because once the recession snowball starts, it's very, very hard to stop.

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## How fathers can help their families

By **DERRICK MORGAN**  
THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

James Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, used to tell the story of a greeting-card company that decided to provide free Mother's Day cards for prison inmates. The response was amazing, with long lines to get the cards. The next month when Father's Day rolled around, the company decided to do the same thing. But this time, not a single prisoner took them up on the offer.

How many of those men could have avoided prison if they had a solid relationship with their dad? How much more successful could our people, our families, and our nation be if more men stepped up to love and lead their families?

Asserting the importance of fathers is often met with vehement opposition. Perhaps because so many fathers have fallen short over the years, or perhaps because our fallen nature simply makes us prone to rebellion, some insist that fathers can be cut out of the family entirely.

Government programs that incentivize single motherhood already reflect our culture's indifference to fatherhood. Social norms that dismiss the importance of marriage and family formation do the same. Just how expendable are fathers today? According to a USA Today report earlier this year, our scientific establishment is "getting closer to the possibility of making a new person... without the need for sex."

With so many forces aligned against fatherhood, it should come as no surprise that nearly 40% of births in the United States occur outside of marriage, up from 28% in 1990.

These figures only tend to get worse over time. Kids who grow up without fathers, on average, have worse life outcomes. Seventy-one percent of high school dropouts are fatherless, 70% of juvenile delinquents are fatherless, and 75% of adolescent patients in substance abuse centers are fatherless. All too often, these children grow up to raise their own children in single-parent households.

This is particularly true for boys, who need their father to be a role model of healthy masculinity. No matter how much the culture might protest, men and women are different, and without a dad young men struggle.

Thankfully, there are many exceptions to these macro trends. Young men all around the country are defying the statistics, standing up to the culture, settling down with their wives, and sticking around for their children. Indeed, I am grateful to work with many such fathers in my role at the Heritage Foundation.

What should men today do if they want the best outcomes for their wives, for their children, and for themselves? Below are a

few research-based suggestions for all fathers. They are not always easy to follow, but they are simple.

First, attend to your marriage. According to Communio's nationwide study on faith and relationships, on any given Sunday, a married woman in church is 62% more likely to report that she is struggling in her marriage than her husband is. This reflects another disturbing stat that young men need to be aware of: Women account for roughly 70% of those who initiate a marital breakup. So, pay attention to your spouse, and avoid centering everything around your work, hobbies or even your children. Invest in date nights. Help around the house. Make sure that you both are on the same page about your family finances.

Second, attend church. The same Communio study referenced above found that the fate of faith and family are intertwined. In fact, it showed that 80% of church goers come from intact families with continuously married parents. More than 10 years ago, Charles Murray's *Coming Apart* already indicated the importance of faith to success in modern life when it noted that who attended religious services "more than weekly" were 20% more likely to report being "very happy" than those who attended "once per year" or less. Consistent church goers are more productive, happier, and their children have better outcomes.

Finally, get home for dinner, the earlier the better. Researchers at the Institute for Family Studies have found that "parents who eat dinner before 6:15 p.m. read during the evening with children 27% longer, play with children during the evening 18% longer, spend 11% more quality time with children during the evening, and spend 14% more overall time with children." While these percentages may seem marginal, making sure you're home for dinner ensures that quality time with your children is part of your everyday schedule, and that can make all the difference.

In 2023, millions of young Americans are yearning for a healthy society, a strong nation, and a clear purpose for their own lives. To achieve each of these goods, they should direct their energy toward constructing a healthy home. After all, your boss can always find a replacement for you at work, but only one person can be "Dad" to your children.

This Father's Day, all of us can do our part by recognizing the key role of fathers and encouraging the dads in our lives to prioritize being good husbands, attending church, and getting home for dinner. Together, these three simple actions can form the basis of happy, healthy families, flourishing communities, and a stronger nation.

*Derrick Morgan is the executive vice president of The Heritage Foundation.*



**EDITORIAL POLICY**

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

# Always the con man, Trump didn't pay for anyone's meal at Versailles like he promised

**C**uban Americans who don't support disgraced ex-president Donald Trump—and there are many of us—are disgusted and furious with his post-arraignment host, the landmark restaurant-bakery Versailles.

People on social media are calling an “embarrassment” and “shameful” the obsequious way Miami Republicans embraced Trump, sang happy birthday and organized a prayer circle—as if he had returned from fighting a war, not surrendering after a historic federal indictment.

But should we really take Versailles to task—or was the Trump takeover an inevitable act of democratic free speech, as some claim in defense of the restaurant and/or Trump's supporters?

According to my reporting, the situation is more nuanced than what was seen on television.

Certainly, it was heartbreaking to see the iconic gathering place for exiles become the setting for Trump to clean up his image after being booked and fingerprinted on 37 felony counts of alleged lawless, treasonous behavior.

**READ MORE:** Tee time with the traitor, shameless love. That's how Miami rolls for indicted Trump | Opinion

After all, the restaurant's Republican founder, the late Felipe Valls Sr., used to proudly boast of having a bipartisan hall of fame of politicians swinging by every election season.

Versailles hosted Democrat Bill Clinton three times. Mayor Alex Penelas shared a cafecito there with Clinton's vice president, Al Gore.

Lately, however, it seems the rowdy MAGA crowd has laid claim to the terrain as theirs.

But it isn't, really.

Perhaps the Democrats have abandoned it?

Versailles, its fans assure me, is still the quintessential Miami spot where all of us—no matter the political party—have celebrated Marlins and Heat championships and the death of tyrant Fidel Castro. It's the setting where local and national media set up cameras to gauge Cuban-American opinion, whether it's the launch of President Obama's engagement policy or to protest Cuba's decades-long crackdown on human rights.

## Food and politics

The Valls family, a mix of Republicans (father and son) and Democrats (some in the younger generation), wasn't there on Tuesday to greet Trump.

“I'm on a family vacation and disconnected,” Felipe Valls Jr. texted me Thursday, declining to comment further. He referred me to spokesman Freddy Balsera, a well-known Democrat and family friend.

Trump didn't ask for the owners' permission to make an appearance after court, Balsera told me. Local party operatives arranged the drive-by. If some media knew about it, it was because the Trump camp leaked it, Balsera said.

“Trump has really capable advisers locally—and I'm saying this as a Democrat—but you have to give them credit,” he said. “If you want to make an impact on the Latin community, you go there. No, the Vallses didn't know he was going.”

In fact, Valls Jr. has said in the past that which politician shows up isn't “something I can control.” He also has said the political activity hurts more that it helps business.

“Versailles is more Miami's restaurant than ours,” Valls, Jr., now at the helm, told me when I profiled the restaurant on its 40th anniversary in 2011. “Few restaurants are taken to heart by the community like Versailles. It's really amazing. They really feel like it's theirs. It really is. Three generations of Cubans, tourists, Latin Americans, Anglos have come through here.”

He reiterated the same thing in 2021, when the Herald again wrote about the restaurant on its 50th anniversary.

## Con man didn't pay—again

So there you have it, it's not Trumplandia—though it sure looks like it sometimes.

“Food for everyone!” Trump promised as he walked into a Republican Party cast that included state Sen. Ileana Garcia (first elected by 35 votes) and Trump-endorsed Miami-Dade Commissioner Kevin Cabrera.

A crass, let-them-eat-croquetas moment reminiscent of when Trump threw paper towels into a crowd in Puerto Rico when he visited after catastrophic Hurricane Maria in 2017.

Plus, the cheap conman didn't pay for a single croqueta or pastelito consumed by his followers as he promised, Miami New Times first reported and I confirmed.

Just another lie by the voter-fired Liar-in-Chief.

“As far as I know, everyone who was there paid for their own meal,” Balsera said. “I don't think the Valls are too keen on people who dine and dash.”

Trump used us again, like he did Bay of Pigs veterans to get

By **FABIOLA SANTIAGO**

Miami Herald

*Fabiola Santiago is a columnist for the Miami Herald.*



their endorsement after his negotiations with the Castro regime for a Havana Tower and Varadero golf course went south.

Here's my recommendation: Rather than focus on Versailles, read the 49-page indictment. The extent of its gravity should change minds better than any restaurant boycott, which some have suggested.

Having said this, Miamians who have patronized his eatery for decades are right to feel disgust when a criminally charged politician uses a beloved institution as backdrop for his disinformation campaign.

Seeing Trump supporters singing “Happy Birthday” to the American caudillo reminded me of the Cuban music acts exiles oppose in Miami for singing to Fidel Castro.

“I haven't visited Versailles in at least a decade precisely because it's where the Cuban right-wing extremists congregate,” Victoria Rivero Elliott, a patron whom I quoted in my 40th-anniversary story and who used to love how warmly the staff treated her and her family told me Thursday. “On Tuesday, I felt deeply ashamed of and embarrassed by the Cuban Trumpistas' behavior. We truly are a banana republic.”

She added: “And for whatever it's worth, I would feel the same if it had been Islas Canarias or Havana Harry's or Havana 1957. It was the people's behavior that made the spectacle so sordid.”

## Forget a boycott

Some Democrats are calling for a boycott of Versailles, but this strategy, more often than not, doesn't work and only serves to yield even more ground to the opposition.

The Trump episode was lamentable, but what Democrats need to do is reclaim their place at the Versailles table.

The times call for courage, not backing down.

We, as a community, must survive Trump and whoever comes next.

Let's keep the croquetas neutral.

# Why Schwarzenegger, Stallone and nostalgia for '80s action movies are back

**T**hreats from Moscow. Rampant inflation. A deadly disease resisting eradication. Worries about the replacement of American workers. Sly. Ahnold.

Looking at the news of the past several years, we might think we've been rocketed back to the 1980s, just with less neon and fewer Rubik's Cubes. History is repeating itself, and not only through fractured politics and the threat of a new Cold War.

In the '80s, a parade of one-man armies marched into movie theaters, dispensing justice and obliterating the baddies—and all the real-world anxieties those villains represented. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone and the action stars who followed in their slipstream jibed with the national mood.

Forty years ago, anyone afraid and uncertain could seek comfort in the thickly muscled arms of action movie stars, whose characters fulfilled empowerment fantasies by meeting adversity with a wry smile and a loaded machine gun. Stallone's “Rambo” saga saw a tormented Vietnam vet become so unstoppable that he could head back to the jungle and restore American pride. Other films saw these actors take on drug dealers, serial killers, even—in the case of the bizarre “Cobra”—a cadre of ax-wielding cultists.

As we head into summer, these heroes, as promised, are back. Schwarzenegger and Stallone, both in their 70s, are now mowing down villains in their first TV shows, “FUBAR” and “Tulsa King,” respectively. These shows follow the retro footsteps of last year's “Top Gun: Maverick,” which blasted to the top of the box office—and landed on Oscar ballots—proving that audiences are

ready for some testosterone-soaked nostalgia.

In the 1980s, these movies were a chance to cheer on someone who could actually do something about the threats affecting their lives. For more than a decade, studios have delivered a seemingly endless series of heroes who rely on superpowers to save the day in elaborate, computer-generated scenes. Yet we are still drawn to '80s-style blockbusters that take place in a world that looks like ours. Watching one gives us a guilt-free hit of adrenaline in dark times.

But action-movie highs come at a cost. They tend to offer cartoonishly simple and violent solutions to complex problems—just as strongmen trying to appeal to desperate citizens do. Certainly the first generation of '80s action films, and some of the recent renaissance, are frequently misogynistic, and often have nasty streaks of racism and xenophobia.

And those faults can't just be attributed to the movies being products of their times. “Rambo: Last Blood,” the most recent in the franchise, came out in 2019 and saw its hero take on demonically evil Mexicans, as if a Trump campaign speech had been fused with a Hollywood pitch. Extreme right-leaning politicians have also embraced the action stars of this era. Steven Seagal was feted by Russian President Vladimir Putin this year. Jean-Claude Van Damme's “Bloodsport” is said to be one of former President Trump's favorite movies, though he apparently skips through much of the dialogue.

These movies' stark “we're good, you're evil” philosophy affected us in ways we may not have recognized when they

By **NICK DE SEMLYEN**

Los Angeles Times

*Nick de Semlyen is the editor of Empire magazine. His newest book is The Last Action Heroes: The Triumphs, Flops, and Feuds of Hollywood's Kings of Carnage.*








came out. The feeling of “you're either with us or against us” that filled the screen permeates current political discourse. The films' idolization of firearms, with endless Glocks, pump-actions and assault rifles, has surely helped fan the flames of American gun worship. As outrageously entertaining as Schwarzenegger's “Commando” is, its director ruefully admits that the movie has been used to stir up child soldiers in Africa before they were forced into combat.

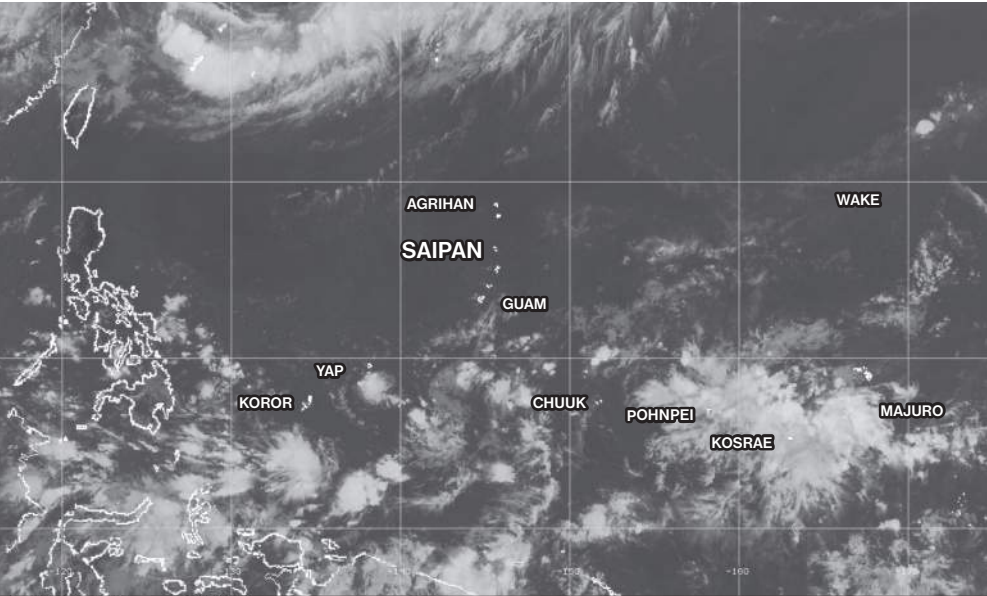
So, how should we think about our nostalgia for these heroes? Perhaps the trick is to approach them with the kind of nuance that's too often missing these days. We can appreciate their can-do spirit and the excitement they generate, while admitting their dangers and considering how their best qualities might fit in the 21st century.

It's still thrilling to watch two Terminators grapple in a shopping mall, or see John McClane save Christmas, or cheer as Rocky battles Drago. And it's strangely soothing right now to watch Arnie melt down a rogue cyborg (take that, Chat-GPT!) or Sly decimate a Soviet army (in your face, Putin!). In the short term, they ease our minds—and remind us that in real life we shouldn't wait for someone else to save us.



# The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		Isolated showers. Mostly sunny		A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny		A 30 percent chance of showers. Partly sunny		Mostly sunny	
88°	78°	87°	79°	86°	79°	88°	79°	88°	79°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



**PICTURE TIME: 8:57 AM, MONDAY, JUNE 19, 2023**  
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite shows partly cloudy skies and isolated showers moving through the Marianas Waters. The Ipan buoy reveals combined seas of 4 to 5 feet, composed mainly of east trade-wind swell with a few wind waves added in. Wave model guidance indicates very little in the way of westerly swell.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: [www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/](http://www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/)

MICRONESIA			▲▼°F
Guam and Rota	Thunderstorms	87° / 81°	
Palau	Scattered Thunderstorms	83° / 76°	
Yap	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°	
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°	
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	85° / 77°	
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	86° / 79°	
Majuro	Thunderstorms	84° / 80°	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:47 AM	6:49 PM
Wednesday	5:47 AM	6:49 PM
Thursday	5:48 AM	6:49 PM
Friday	5:48 AM	6:49 PM
Saturday	5:48 AM	6:50 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	7:12 AM	8:42 PM	-
Wednesday	8:06 AM	9:27 PM	-
Thursday	8:58 AM	10:09 PM	-
Friday	9:48 AM	10:46 PM	-
Saturday	10:36 AM	11:22 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲▼°F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	61° / 54°	
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	92° / 67°	
Hong Kong	Isolated Thunderstorms	88° / 82°	
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	86° / 73°	
London	Thunderstorms	76° / 58°	
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	73° / 59°	
Manila	Thunderstorms	92° / 79°	
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	54° / 38°	
Miami	Thunderstorms	87° / 78°	
New York	Mostly Sunny	79° / 64°	
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	85° / 71°	
Paris	Thunderstorms	79° / 64°	
Busan	Mostly Cloudy	76° / 70°	
Rome	Mostly Sunny	90° / 66°	
Salem	Thunderstorms	81° / 67°	
San Francisco	Sunny/Wind	64° / 51°	
Seoul	Cloudy	84° / 67°	
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	80° / 66°	
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	91° / 70°	

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:28 AM	Low Tide	1.50	
7:38 AM	High Tide	1.90	
3:19 PM	Low Tide	-0.12	
10:49 PM	High Tide	1.95	

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2023							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:50AM	10:30AM	Daily	UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily
UA156	6:55PM	7:40PM	1, 4 effective June 5	UA112	5:00PM	5:50PM	1, 4 effective June 5
SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
UA824	7:25AM	9:55AM	1, 3, 5	UA825	9:25PM	1:50AM+1	2, 4, 7
GUAM-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-GUAM			
PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily	UA184	10:25PM	4:25AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA193	6:55PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau	UA189	10:25PM	6:10AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:15PM	9:10PM	Daily	PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
				UA192	11:50PM	5:35AM+1	2, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/703	4:20AM	10:35PM	1, 4, 5, 7 via ICN	UA184/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
UA117/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam	UA192/174	10:25PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA117/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau	UA184/174	11:50PM	8:45AM+1	2, 5 via Guam
SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)				INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily	7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
OZ626	4:20AM	7:55AM	1, 4, 5, 7	TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily	OZ625	9:25PM	2:55AM+1	3, 4, 6, 7
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily	7C3405	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JUNE 1, 2022							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				ROTA TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	8:30	9:00	Daily	3101	9:30	10:00	Daily
1302	11:00	11:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	3102	13:00	13:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun
1302	12:00	12:30	Tues/Thurs/ Sat/Sun	3102	14:00	14:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
1303	15:30	16:00	Daily	3103	16:30	17:00	Daily
ROTA TO GUAM				GUAM TO ROTA			
LIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	12:00	12:30	Mon/Wed/Fri	4301	13:00	13:30	Mon/Wed/Fri
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY	FLIGHT #	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1202	8:00	8:15	Daily	2102	8:30	8:45	Daily
1203	9:00	9:15	Daily	2103	9:30	9:45	Daily
1204	10:00	10:15	Daily	2104	10:30	10:45	Daily
1208	14:00	14:15	Daily	2108	14:30	14:45	Daily
1209	15:00	15:15	Daily	2109	15:30	15:45	Daily
1210	16:00	16:15	Daily	2110	16:30	16:45	Daily
1211	17:00	17:15	Daily	2111	17:30	17:45	Daily

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# Business

## Worksite Labs launches first diagnostics center in Guam

**D E D E D O ,** Guam—Worksite Labs, a premier diagnostic laboratory company, is calling Guam home with the opening of its high-complexity laboratory and first of three patient service centers on June 12, 2023, at the Dededo Pay-Less Supermarket. The company is also partnering with Guam's mayors and the Todu Guam Foundation to provide pop-up diagnostic centers to support relief efforts in the community.

"The opening of our first Worksite Labs Patient Service Center (PSC) in Guam was unfortunately delayed by Typhoon Mawar. However, during this period, we recognized the pressing needs of the community affected by the storm and decided to extend our support beyond the confines of our site. By collaborating with the mayors' offices, we established pop-up medical testing sites and formed a partnership with the Todu Guam Foundation to offer diagnostic services as part of their medical outreach initiative. Our intention is to invest in the community and provide our services where they were most needed after the devastating storm," stated Gary Frazier, founder and CEO of Worksite Labs. He further announced, "We are thrilled to share that our first PSC, located within the

Dededo Pay-Less Supermarket, officially opened its doors on June 12, and we are now welcoming new customers."

Worksite Labs is a national healthcare diagnostics and technology company that delivers fast, reliable results by placing full-service labs where they're needed most. The company's innovative decentralized laboratory model and advanced diagnostic testing capabilities, the only one of its kind, give customers superior access to important healthcare services directly into communities so residents can make informed decisions about their well-being.

Worksite Labs opened its first Guam PSC in the Dededo Pay-Less Supermarket on June 12. The company has plans to open two more PSCs at the Guam Medical Plaza and the Yigo Pay-Less Supermarket and its main lab at Guam Regional Medical Center in the coming months. Worksite Labs operates in 23 major cities, seven states, and Guam.

"We are a new generation of diagnostic laboratory testing. Our model aims to positively impact every Guam resident, healthcare provider, and health system to give patients greater power over their health and wellbeing," said Frazier. "We are pleased to bring labs into the villages to serve our Guam community and pro-



vide access to quality healthcare through the delivery of quick, affordable, and trusted diagnostic testing for all."

Frazier added, "We bring quality, affordable testing services to where our customers live, work, and play. In Guam,

our PSC locations were selected to best serve the most populated areas on the island. Our Dededo Pay-Less PSC is now open, and we are working to open another two PSCs and our main lab within the months ahead to provide even greater convenience for our customers. We are looking to open more locations later this year to better serve the community."

### Access for all

Worksite Labs expanded to Guam as an opportunity to provide better access directly to where those diagnostic services are needed. The company's model will bring the speed and agility of a localized lab and the technology and service of a national laboratory network to Guam. During the soft opening of the Worksite Labs Dededo

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Worksite Labs recently opened three patient service centers at Dededo Pay-Less Supermarket

Pay-Less location, Worksite Labs is offering a curated list of testing. The test menu can be found on its website at [guam.worksitelabs.com](http://guam.worksitelabs.com).

Worksite Labs is credentialed to work with all local insurance plans on Guam—Calvo's SelectCare, TakeCare, NetCare, StayWell, Medicare, Medicaid, MIP (Medically Indigent Program), and soon TRICARE. Customers can make an appointment online at [guam.worksitelabs.com](http://guam.worksitelabs.com) or are welcome to walk into the new Worksite Labs Patient Service Center at the Dededo Pay-Less. A doctor's requisition form is required for testing.

For more information about Worksite Labs, its new locations, the current menu of tests offered, and community relief sites and dates, please visit [guam.worksitelabs.com](http://guam.worksitelabs.com). Physicians can download the Worksite Labs requisition form on the website.

### About Worksite Labs

Worksite Labs is a decentralized healthcare testing and diagnostics company that delivers fast, reliable results by placing full-service labs where they are needed most. It uses technology, innovation, and logistical expertise to disrupt current industry practices, giving customers superior access to healthcare services so they can make informed decisions about their well-being. Based in Long Beach, California, the company operates labs in 23 major cities, seven states, and Guam. (PR)

## Eviction filings 50% higher than pre-pandemic in some cities as rents rise

**ATLANTA (AP)**—Entering court using a walker, a doctor's note clutched in his hand, 70-year-old Dana Williams, who suffers serious heart problems, hypertension and asthma, pleaded to delay eviction from his two-bedroom apartment in Atlanta.

Although sympathetic, the judge said state law required him to evict Williams and his 25-year-old daughter De'mai Williams in April because they owed \$8,348 in unpaid rent and fees on their \$940-a-month apartment.

They have been living in limbo ever since.

They moved into a dilapidated Atlanta hotel room with water dripping through the bathroom ceiling, broken furniture and no refrigerator or microwave. But at \$275-a-week, it was all they could afford on Williams' \$900 monthly social security check and the \$800 his daughter gets biweekly from a state agency as her father's caretaker.

"I really don't want to be here by the time his birthday comes" in August, De'mai Williams said. "For his health, it's just not right."

The Williams family is among millions of tenants from New York state to Las Vegas who have been evicted or face imminent eviction.

After a lull during the pandemic, eviction filings by landlords have come roaring back, driven by rising rents and a long-running shortage of affordable housing. Most low-income tenants can no longer count on pandemic resources that had kept them housed, and many are finding it hard to recover because they haven't found steady work or their wages haven't kept pace with the rising cost of rent, food and other necessities.

Homelessness, as a result, is rising.

"Protections have ended, the federal moratorium is obviously over, and emergency rental assistance money has

dried up in most places," said Daniel Grubbs-Donovan, a research specialist at Princeton University's Eviction Lab.

"Across the country, low-income renters are in an even worse situation than before the pandemic due to things like massive increases in rent during the pandemic, inflation and other pandemic-era related financial difficulties."

Eviction filings are more than 50% higher than the pre-pandemic average in some cities, according to the Eviction Lab, which tracks filings in nearly three dozen cities and 10 states. Landlords file around 3.6 million eviction cases every year.

Among the hardest-hit are Houston, where rates were 56% higher in April and 50% higher in May. In Minneapolis/St. Paul, rates rose 106% in March, 55% in April and 63% in May. Nashville was 35% higher and Phoenix 33% higher in May; Rhode Island was up 32% in May.

## Regulators take aim at AI to protect consumers and workers

**NEW YORK (AP)**—As concerns grow over increasingly powerful artificial intelligence systems like ChatGPT, the nation's financial watchdog says it's working to ensure that companies follow the law when they're using AI.

Already, automated systems and algorithms help determine credit ratings, loan terms, bank account fees, and other aspects of our financial lives. AI also affects hiring, housing and working conditions.

Ben Winters, Senior Counsel for the Electronic Privacy Information Center, said a joint statement on enforcement released by federal agencies last month was a positive first step.

"There's this narrative that AI is entirely unregulated, which is not really true," he said. "They're saying, 'Just because you use

AI to make a decision, that doesn't mean you're exempt from responsibility regarding the impacts of that decision. This is our opinion on this. We're watching."

In the past year, the Consumer Finance Protection Bureau said it has fined banks over mismanaged automated systems that resulted in wrongful home foreclosures, car repossessions, and lost benefit payments, after the institutions relied on new technology and faulty algorithms.

There will be no "AI exemptions" to consumer protection, regulators say, pointing to these enforcement actions as examples.

Consumer Finance Protection Bureau Director Rohit Chopra said the agency has "already started some work to continue to muscle up internally when it comes to bring-

ing on board data scientists, technologists and others to make sure we can confront these challenges" and that the agency is continuing to identify potentially illegal activity.

Representatives from the Federal Trade Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Department of Justice, as well as the CFPB, all say they're directing resources and staff to take aim at new tech and identify negative ways it could affect consumers' lives.

"One of the things we're trying to make crystal clear is that if companies don't even understand how their AI is making decisions, they can't really use it," Chopra said. "In other cases, we're looking at how our fair lending laws are being adhered to when it comes to the use of all of this data."



# Nation

## Americans mark Juneteenth with parties, events, quiet reflection on end of slavery

**DETROIT** (AP)—Americans across the country this weekend celebrated Juneteenth, marking the relatively new national holiday with cookouts, parades and other gatherings as they commemorated the end of slavery after the Civil War.

While many have treated the long holiday weekend as a reason for a party, others urged quiet reflection on America's often violent and oppressive treatment of its Black citizens. And still others have remarked at the strangeness of celebrating a federal holiday marking the end of slavery in the nation while many Americans are trying to stop parts of that history from being taught in public schools.

"Is #Juneteenth the only federal holiday that some states have banned the teaching of its history and significance?" Author Michelle Duster asked on Twitter this weekend, referring to measures in Florida, Oklahoma and Alabama prohibiting an Advancement Placement African American studies course or the teaching of certain concepts of race and racism.

Monday's federal holiday commemorates the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, learned they had been freed — two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued during the bloody Civil War.

On Juneteenth weekend, a Roman Catholic church in



The Gesu Choir, standing, is cheered on by the congregation as they sing during Mass, Sunday, June 18, 2023, at Gesu Catholic Church in Detroit.

Detroit devoted its service to urging parishioners to take a deeper look at the lessons from the holiday.

"In order to have justice we must work for peace. And in order to have peace we must work for justice," John Thorne, executive director of the Detroit Catholic Pastoral Alliance, said to the congregation at Gesu Catholic Church in Detroit.

Standing before paintings

of a Black Jesus and Mary, Thorne said Juneteenth is a day of celebration, but it also "has to be much more."

It was important to speak about Juneteenth during Sunday Mass, the Rev. Lorn Snow told a reporter as the service was ending.

"The struggle's still not over with. There's a lot of work to be done," he said.

Most Black Americans

agree, according to a recent poll. A full 70% of Black adults queried in a AP-NORC poll said "a lot" needs to be done to achieve equal treatment for African Americans in policing. And Black Ameri-

cans suffer from significantly worse health outcomes than their white peers across a variety of measures, including rates of maternal mortality, asthma, high blood pressure and Alzheimer's disease.

## At least 6 killed, dozens injured in weekend shootings across US

By **MATTHEW BROWN**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

At least six people including a Pennsylvania state trooper were killed and dozens injured in a string of weekend violence and mass shootings across the U.S.

The shootings in suburban Chicago, Washington state, Pennsylvania, St. Louis, Southern California and Baltimore follow a surge in homicides and other violence over the past several years that experts say accelerated during the coronavirus pandemic.

"There's no question there's been a spike in violence," said Daniel Nagin, a professor of public policy and statistics at Carnegie Mellon University. "Some of these cases seem to be just disputes, often among adolescents, and those disputes are played out with firearms, not with fists."

Researchers disagree over the cause of the increase. Theories include the possibility that violence is driven by the prevalence of guns in America, or by less aggressive police tactics or a decline in prosecutions for misdemeanor weapon offenses, Nagin said.

As of Sunday evening,

none of the weekend events fit the definition of a mass killing, because fewer than four people died at each location. However, the number of injured in most of the cases does match the widely accepted definition for mass shootings.

Here's a look at the shootings this weekend:

### WILLOWBROOK, ILLINOIS

At least 23 people were shot, one fatally, early Sunday in a suburban Chicago parking lot where hundreds of people had gathered to celebrate Juneteenth, authorities said.

The DuPage County sheriff's office described a "peaceful gathering" that suddenly turned violent as a number of people fired multiple shots into the crowd in Willowbrook, Illinois, about 20 miles southwest of Chicago.

A motive for the attack wasn't immediately known. Sheriff's spokesman Robert Carroll said authorities were interviewing "persons of interest" in the shooting, the Daily Herald reported.

A witness, Markeshia Avery, said the celebration was meant to mark Juneteenth, Monday's federal holiday

commemorating the day in 1865 when enslaved people in Galveston, Texas, learned they had been freed—two years after the Emancipation Proclamation.

"We just started hearing shooting, so we dropped down until they stopped," Avery told WLS-TV.

### WASHINGTON STATE

Two people were killed and two others were injured when a shooter began firing "randomly" into a crowd at a Washington state campground where people stayed to attend a nearby music festival on Saturday night, police said.

The suspect was shot in a confrontation with law enforcement officers and taken into custody, several hundred yards from the Beyond Wonderland electronic dance music festival.

A public alert advised people of an active shooter in the area and advised them to "run, hide or fight."

The festival carried on until early Sunday morning, Grant County Sheriff's Office spokesman Kyle Foreman said. Organizers then posted a tweet saying Sunday's concert was canceled.

## AS STATES START POST-PANDEMIC PURGE OF ROLLS

## More than 1M dropped from Medicaid

By **DAVID A. LIEB and ANDREW DeMILLO**  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

More than 1 million people have been dropped from Medicaid in the past couple months as some states moved swiftly to halt health care coverage following the end of the coronavirus pandemic.

Most got dropped for not filling out paperwork.

Though the eligibility review is required by the federal government, President's Joe Biden's administration isn't too pleased at how efficiently some other states are accomplishing the task.

"Pushing through things and rushing it will lead to eligible people — kids and families — losing coverage for some period of time," Daniel Tsai, a top federal Medicaid official recently told reporters.

Already, about 1.5 million people have been removed from Medicaid in more than

two dozen states that started the process in April or May, according to publicly available reports and data obtained by The Associated Press.

Florida has dropped several hundred thousand people, by far the most among states. The drop rate also has been particularly high in other states. For people whose cases were decided in May, around half or more got dropped in Arkansas, Idaho, Kansas, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah and West Virginia.

By its own count, Arkansas has dropped more than 140,000 people from Medicaid.

The eligibility redeterminations have created headaches for Jennifer Mojica, 28, who was told in April that she no longer qualified for Medicaid because Arkansas had incorrectly determined her income was above the limit.

She got that resolved, but was then told her 5-year-

old son was being dropped from Medicaid because she had requested his cancellation—something that never happened, she said. Her son's coverage has been restored, but now Mojica says she's been told her husband no longer qualifies. The uncertainty has been frustrating, she said.

"It was like fixing one thing and then another problem came up, and they fixed it and then something else came up," Mojica said.

Arkansas officials said they have tried to renew coverage automatically for as many people as possible and placed a special emphasis on reaching families with children. But a 2021 state law requires the post-pandemic eligibility redeterminations to be completed in six months, and the state will continue "to swiftly disenroll individuals who are no longer eligible," the Department of Human Services said in statement.



# Asia

## AS BLINKEN FINISHES 1ST DAY OF MEETINGS

### US, China remain at odds on many issues

**BEIJING (AP)**—The United States and China have failed to overcome their most serious disagreements but were able to discuss them in a potentially constructive way and have agreed to continue talks, U.S. and Chinese officials said Sunday.

U.S. officials said Secretary of State Antony Blinken was able during a nearly 6-hour meeting to secure a visit to Washington by Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang. But both sides said advancement on the issues that divide them remains a work in progress while the Chinese foreign ministry said “the China-U.S. relationship is at the lowest point since its establishment.”

China confirmed that Qin had accepted the invitation at a “mutually convenient time” but no date was set.

The State Department said that Blinken had stressed “the importance of diplomacy and maintaining open channels of communication across the full range of issues to reduce the risk of misperception and miscalculation.”

The Chinese, meanwhile, restated their position that the current state of relations “does not serve the fundamental interests of the two peoples or meet the shared expectations of the international community,” according to the foreign ministry.

Blinken, the highest-level American official to visit China since President Joe Biden took office, will have more senior level contacts with the Chinese on Monday, including potentially with Chinese leader Xi Jinping.

Despite Blinken’s presence

in the Chinese capital, the prospects for any significant breakthrough on the most vexing issues facing the planet’s two largest economies was slim.

And neither side showed any inclination to back down on their entrenched positions.

Blinken’s trip followed his postponement of plans to visit China in February after the shootdown of a Chinese surveillance balloon over the U.S.

The talks could pave the way for a meeting in the coming months between Biden and Xi. Biden said Saturday that he hoped to be able to meet with Xi in the coming months to take up the plethora of differences that divide them.

That long list includes disagreements ranging from trade to Taiwan, human rights conditions in China and Hong Kong to Chinese military assertiveness in the South China Sea and Russia’s war in Ukraine.

In his meetings on Sunday, Blinken also pressed the Chinese to release detained American citizens and to take steps to curb the production and export of fentanyl precursors that are fueling the opioid crisis in the United States.

Blinken “made clear that the United States will always stand up for the interests and values of the American people and work with its allies and partners to advance our vision for a world that is free, open, and upholds the international rules-based order,” the State Department said.

The Chinese foreign ministry countered in its statement that “China hopes that the U.S. will adopt an objective and rational perception of China, work with China in the same direction, uphold the

political foundation of China-U.S. relations, and handle unexpected and sporadic events in a calm, professional and rational manner.”

Shortly before leaving Washington, Blinken emphasized the importance of the U.S. and China establishing and maintaining better lines of communication.

Biden and Xi had made commitments to improve communications “precisely so that we can make sure we are communicating as clearly as possible to avoid possible misunderstandings and miscommunications,” Blinken said Friday.

Xi offered a hint of a possible willingness to reduce tensions, saying in a meeting with Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates on Friday that the United States and China can cooperate to “benefit our two countries.”

Since the cancellation of Blinken’s trip in February, there have been some high-level engagements. CIA chief William Burns traveled to China in May, while China’s commerce minister traveled to the U.S. And Biden’s national security adviser Jake Sullivan met with senior Chinese foreign policy adviser Wang Yi in Vienna in May.

But those have been punctuated by bursts of angry rhetoric from both sides over the Taiwan Strait, their broader intentions in the Indo-Pacific, China’s refusal to condemn Russia for its war against Ukraine, and U.S. allegations from Washington that Beijing is attempting to boost its worldwide surveillance capabilities, including in Cuba.

day ruling party meeting that ended Sunday, with the presence of Kim and other top officials. A lengthy Korean Central News Agency dispatch on the meeting didn’t clearly say who spoke, but said a report to the meeting “bitterly criticized the officials who irresponsibly conducted the preparations for (the) satellite launch.”

#### PH ferry catches fire at sea, all 120 people aboard rescued

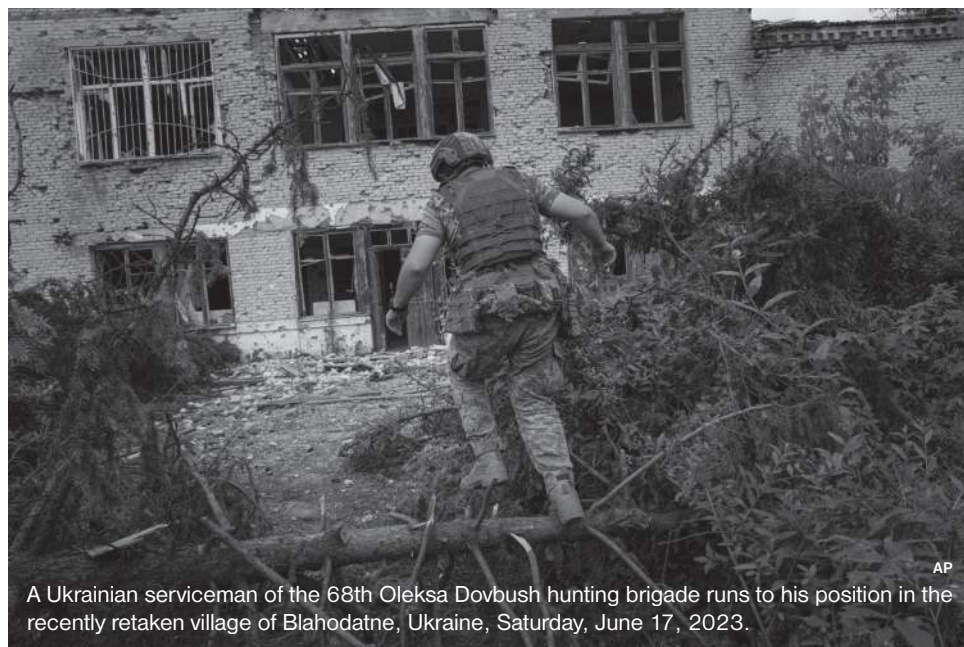
**MANILA, Philippines (AP)**—All 120 passengers and crew members aboard a Philippine ferry that caught fire at sea on Sunday were rescued safely and the fire was extinguished, the coast guard said. The M/V Esperanza Star caught fire at dawn while traveling from Siquijor province to Bohol province in the central

Philippines with 65 passengers and 55 crewmembers, the coast guard said. It added that it deployed two vessels for rescue and to help put out the flames, which raged for more than five hours. Photos and video released by the coast guard show flames and black smoke billowing from two decks at one end of the ferry. Coast guard personnel onboard another vessel used a water cannon to put out the fire while a fishing boat and one other vessel can be seen nearby. “All those who were onboard the ferry are safe,” Joy Gumatay, coast guard spokeswoman, said in a statement but gave no further details. She added that the survivors were brought to the port city of Tagbilaran in Bohol province and an investigation was underway.

# World

## AS UKRAINE STRIKES BACK VS RUSSIA

### Both sides suffer heavy casualties



**KYIV, Ukraine (AP)**—Russia and Ukraine are suffering high numbers of military casualties as Ukraine fights to dislodge the Kremlin’s forces from occupied areas in the early stages of its counter-offensive, British officials said Sunday.

Russian losses are probably at their highest level since the peak of the battle for Bakhmut in March, U.K. military officials said in their regular assessment.

According to British intelligence, the most intense fighting has centered on the southeastern Zaporizhzhia province, around Bakhmut and further west in Ukraine’s eastern Donetsk province. While the update reported that Ukraine was on the offensive in these areas and had “made small advances,” it said that Russian forces were conducting “relatively

effective defensive operations” in Ukraine’s south.

The Ukrainian military said in a regular update Sunday morning that over the previous 24 hours Russia had carried out 43 airstrikes, four missile strikes and 51 attacks from multiple rocket launchers. According to the statement by the General Staff, Russia continues to concentrate its efforts on offensive operations in Ukraine’s industrial east, focusing attacks around Bakhmut, Avdiivka, Marinka and Lyman in Donetsk province, with 26 combat clashes taking place.

Donetsk regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said that two civilians were killed, with a further three wounded in the past day.

Ukrainian officials said Russian forces also launched airstrikes on other regions of the east and south of the country.

One civilian was killed and four more wounded in Kherson province as a result of Russia’s attacks, said regional Gov. Oleksandr Prokudin, while Zaporizhzhia regional Gov. Yuriy Malashko said one person was wounded in Russian attacks that hit 20 settlements in the province.

Vladimir Rogov, an official with the Moscow-appointed administration in the partially occupied Zaporizhzhia region, said Sunday that Ukrainian forces had taken control of the village of Piatykhatky on the Zaporizhzhia battlefield.

Serhiy Bratchuk, spokesperson of the regional government in the southwestern Odesa province, said Ukrainian forces destroyed a “very significant” ammunition depot near the Russian-occupied port city of Henichesk in near-by Kherson province.

### Greek leader blasts critics of rescue effort for sunken migrant vessel

**ATHENS, Greece (AP)**—Authorities continued to search Saturday for victims and survivors of a trawler that sank off the coast of Greece with as many as 750 migrants on board, as conservative leader Kyriakos Mitsotakis blasted critics of the rescue operation.

Naysayers, Mitsotakis said at a campaign stop in the town of Sparta, should turn their ire against traffickers he called “human scum.” The vessel sank on Wednesday.

The Greek coast guard announced Saturday that one Greek Navy frigate and four other vessels were operating 47 nautical miles (54 miles; 87 kilometers) southwest of the town of Pylos in Greece’s southwest. Earlier, two helicopters from the navy and coast guard joined the operation, the coast guard said.

The rescue operation is taking place in rough seas, with near gale-force winds, and in some of the Mediterranean Sea’s deepest waters, at over 5,000 meters (3 miles).

To date, 104 survivors have been rescued and 78 bodies have been recovered. The trawler carried as many as 750 men, women and children from Syria, Egypt, the Palestinian territories and Pakistan. No survivors or bodies have been found since the day of the accident.

The survivors have been taken to a migrant reception center outside Athens. A few have been visited by relatives residing in other European countries.

The Egyptian embassy in Athens on Saturday shared a list of 43 Egyptian migrants, including minors, who sur-

vived the shipwreck. The survivors are all men from Cairo and the Nile Delta provinces of Sharqia and Menofia, the list shows. The embassy said the list was provided by Greek authorities.

Greek authorities continue to face criticism, however, over their failure to act more quickly. They say the migrants insisted they didn’t need any help, but non-governmental organizations say they received a number of calls for help.

On Saturday, parts of the Greek rescue vessel captain’s testimony were published by Greek media. In it he said the migrants refused help, saying they were going to Italy, and untied a rope loosely tied to the trawler’s bow when the coast guard ship had gone closer to inspect.

#### ASIAN BRIEFS

#### N. Korea calls failed spy satellite launch ‘the most serious’ shortcoming, vows 2nd launch

**SEOUL, South Korea (AP)**—Top North Korean officials vowed to push for a second attempt to launch a spy satellite as they called their country’s first, and failed, launch last month “the most serious” shortcoming this year and harshly criticized those responsible, state media reported Monday. In late May, a North Korean rocket carrying a military reconnaissance satellite crashed soon after lift-off, posing a setback to leader Kim Jong Un’s push to acquire a space-based surveillance system to better monitor the United States and South Korea. The failed launch and North Korean efforts to modernize its weapons arsenals were discussed extensively at a three-



## Overdrive

By MARC D. GRASSO  
BOSTON HERALD

## Mercedes EQE500 is a techy EV dream

As the electric vehicle market continues to evolve, German manufacturers have their hands full trying to beat the competition.

Mercedes Benz has always been a leader in innovation and testing the market with their releases. In Grasso's Garage this week, Mercedes delivered the EQE500 4Matic. This new release is a head-scratcher in appearance, but it's one heck of a machine on the inside.

The EQE500 has a 252-mile range on a full charge, so it seems to make the most sense as a local upscale cruiser. Most EV owners who plug in every night when they get home will not have an issue with this range.

Comfort, luxury and power all top the charts in the EQE500. Powered with dual permanently synchronous electric motors with 300 kW with 90.6 kWh high voltage batteries, the EQE500 is quick on its feet. Standard features include com-



The Mercedes Benz EQE, powered with Dual Permanently Synchronous Electric Motors w/300 kW with 90.6 kWh high voltage batteries, is quick on its feet.

**NUTS & BOLTS**  
■ MSRP: \$88,000  
■ MPGe: 83 city / 82 highway  
■ As Tested: \$92,050

fort suspension with selective damping, 10-degree rear axle steering and a new-generation MBUX multimedia system with navigation. Traveling is made easy by active range monitoring and charging station availability alerts through the 12.8-inch central OLED touchscreen portrait display with 12.3-inch instrument cluster.

That's a lot of tech! The interior has a monster screen, and with Mercedes Benz technology, this one is sure to do it all. The term 4Matic refers to all-wheel drive, which is another great plus on top of all of the techy features.

Mercedes Benz continues to lead the way in design and luxury development, and the EQE500 certainly stands out. The bubble-shape exterior takes some getting used to. Maybe my issue is that the front-end nose design has too much slope; I'm not really sure. But on the inside, the EQE500 is a dream. And if you like the distinctive exterior aesthetics, the EQE500 might just be the EV for you.

## AAA: Electric vehicles' range falls when carrying heavy loads

By CHARLES E. RAMIREZ  
THE DETROIT NEWS

Electric vehicles lose a significant amount of range when loaded with heavy cargo, according to a new AAA study released Tuesday.

An electric pickup truck can lose nearly 25% of its range when hauling loads about 100 pounds less than its maximum capacity, the study said.

"Range anxiety remains

a top reason consumers are hesitant to switch from gasoline-powered vehicles to EVs," Adrienne Woodland, a AAA spokeswoman, said in a statement. "While this study may heighten concerns, it's worth remembering that excess weight reduces fuel economy in gas-powered vehicles too."

In the study, the auto club's researchers drove a 2022 Ford F-150 Lightning electric pickup truck

with a 1,400-pound load of sandbags. The load was 110 pounds less than the truck's maximum capacity.

Ford Motor Co.'s F-150 Lightning is one of its most popular vehicles. Last week, the company said it's on track to reach its 150,000-unit production goal and its entry-level Pro model is sold out for model year 2023. A Ford spokeswoman wasn't available to immediately comment on the

study's findings.

AAA's test truck saw its range drop by 24.5% from 278 miles to 210 miles, it said. The test was conducted on a 7.5-mile oval test track and a dynamometer at The Automobile Club of Southern California's Automotive Research Center in Los Angeles.

Simply put, extra weight in a vehicle requires more energy for it to move, researchers said.

"Our testing revealed a significant range reduction,

but it's important to note that the Lightning was loaded to near its maximum capacity," Greg Brannon, director of AAA Automotive Engineering, the auto club's division that conducted the study, said in a statement. "Most buyers will likely use their Lightning with a lighter load, resulting in a much smaller range reduction."

In addition to carrying heavy loads, highway driving or permanent loads can also reduce an electric vehicle's range, AAA said. Drivers

on highways move at higher speeds and aren't able to take advantage of EVs' technology that captures energy from braking and feeds it into the battery, according to experts. Furthermore, electric vehicles with permanent loads such as equipment racks, built-in equipment trays and toolboxes, will also decrease their range, even without additional cargo.

Despite the study's findings, AAA said that electric vehicles remain a viable option for many motorists.

## Highway exit numbers

**Q**: I could be mistaken, but I was under the impression that all U.S. states need to have highway exit numbers that are milepost-based. I know several New England states have had to renumber their exits. I would like to get a new road atlas for my husband once all U.S. states adhere to this. I don't want to purchase a new atlas, only to find out that additional states still need to make changes and then have to buy a new atlas again in a few years. Do you know if or when this project might be completed?

**D.K., Topsfield, Massachusetts**

**A**: The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) dictates how exit sign numbers should work. The operative word here is "should." Unfortunately, some states have not gotten around to complying with numbering the exits to correspond to mile posts. There are still states that continue to use the sequential system such as Exit 1, Exit 2 and so on. Some states are in the process of updating. Unless the old atlas has worn out, stick with it and save a dollar. At least they have not changed the roads in the atlas.

■■■

**Q**: I have a 2017 Ford F150 with 40,000 miles. I took it to the dealer I bought it from and asked to have the tires rotated, which this dealer, and only this dealer had done five times before. I was told that I had swollen lug nuts. They said they would not rotate them unless I paid for replacement lug nuts. They basically claimed the Ford nuts were defective but neither Ford nor the dealer would stand behind them. My Ford Extended Warranty didn't either. They offered to replace the 24 nuts for \$70 using aftermarket parts.



The Federal Highway Administration dictates how exit sign numbers should work.

DREAMTIME/TNS

**What's up with this?**

**R.T., Norfolk, Virginia**

**A**: Ford has long suffered with this problem. As you have discovered, there is no cure but to amputate. The original ones swell when moisture and brine get between the lug nut and its chrome cover causing corrosion. During removal the nuts are destroyed and cannot be reused. Ford sells fresh lug nuts, but aftermarket nuts are fine and cost less. I prefer unsalted.

■■■

**Q**: I balked at paying the dealer to rotate my tires during an oil change. I was told that there is no fee if you buy the tires from the dealer. I replied that I had, indeed, bought the tires from them ... for \$25,000 when I bought the car. "Well, let me speak to my manager" and then, "We will make an exception for you this time." I did that with both cars when

## MOTORMOUTH

BY BOB WEBER  
Tribune News Service

Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. Weber's work has appeared in professional trade magazines and various consumer publications including Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to [motormouth.tribune@gmail.com](mailto:motormouth.tribune@gmail.com).



**they were new. We have bought replacement tires from a national franchise tire company that has free rotation and flat repair (also because they are open seven days a week, unlike the dealership, and sometimes one can have tire trouble on a Sunday).**

**M.J., Racine, Wisconsin**

**A**: I like your moxie. I am surprised when a shop charges for tire rotation. It should always be complimentary with any oil change. There are also advantages to the dealer, including a chance to inspect the brakes and potentially get additional service work.

■■■

**Q**: A question on the discussion of why idle rpm is higher for a cold start: Isn't the high idle speed (and secondary air injection) programmed to more quickly heat the catalytic converter to its optimum temperature?

**K.D., Las Vegas**

**A**: Yes, a higher idle speed will help the converter(s) light off. But the science of fuel having trouble vaporizing effectively in a cold engine still applies, too.



Life & Style

‘The Flash’ opens to \$55 million, a step off the typical superhero pace

By LINDSEY BAHR  
AP FILM WRITER

DC and Warner Bros.’ long-in-the-works superhero movie “The Flash” opened to \$55 million in its first three days in North American theaters, according to studio estimates on Sunday.

Though a fair amount of money by normal standards, a sizable jump from DC’s last release, the “Shazam!” sequel, and enough for a first place start, it’s also muted by superhero standards where \$100 million debut weekends are almost commonplace. The weekend also saw Pixar get its worst three-day opening ever with a \$29.5 million bow by “Elemental.”

It was a crowded weekend at the multiplex overall. In addition to “The Flash” and “Elemental,” the horror-comedy “The Blackening” also opened wide. The only big win was Wes Anderson’s starry “Asteroid City” which earned \$720,000 from just six theaters and the distinction of having the highest per-theater average (\$132,211) since the start of the pandemic.

“The Flash” faced more complications than marketplace conditions. In addition to “The Flash” and “Elemental,” the horror-comedy “The Blackening” also opened wide. It has been in the headlines often over the past year, not because of the movie itself but because of its star Ezra Miller’s off-screen troubles, including arrests, erratic behavior and accusations of misconduct. Miller has apologized and said they are



WARNER BROS. PICTURES VIA AP  
This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows Ezra Miller, from left, Michael Keaton and Ezra Miller in a scene from "The Flash."

seeking mental health treatment. They also bowed out of participating in the normal publicity circuit, except for the premiere.

The studio’s leadership remained bullish on releasing their \$200 million movie, however, confident in its quality and importance to future DC Studios storylines. The movie introduces the multiverse, which allowed for the return of Michael Keaton’s Batman in a movie that also had Ben Affleck’s Batman.

Going into the weekend analysts expected “The Flash” to earn at least \$70 million in its first three days, playing in 4,234 locations domestically. Now, it’s projected to net out with \$64 million in its first four, including Monday’s Juneteenth holiday.

Internationally, it made \$75 million, giving it a \$139 million global start.

“I think Warners did a fantastic job of dealing with the situation they had,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore. “It’s a very interesting case study of what can happen when the title character of a huge movie has these very public controversies. But it’s hard to reverse engineer it to know what effect it may have had.”

Another obstacle was that some of the main promotional outlets—late night talk shows—are still shut down as the Writers Strike continues. Also, with the knowledge that DC is undergoing a major reset, fans might have decided to move on and wait for that.

Critics were mixed but

more positive than not, with a 67% on Rotten Tomatoes. AP’s Jocelyn Noveck wrote in her review that despite some “breezily clever and entertaining” moments, “the final act bogs down in what feels like an endless, generic CGI battle and a kitchen-sink resolution.”

Audiences polled for CinemaScore only gave the film a B, which has not historically been great news for word-of-mouth potential and longevity.

But there is a bit of a gap in the schedule before the next major blockbuster comes in “Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny,” which opens on June 30. Next week’s biggest offering is the R-rated Jennifer Lawrence comedy “No Hard Feelings” and

the nationwide expansion of “Asteroid City.”

Second place went to “Elemental” with an estimated \$29.5 million from 4,035 locations in North America – a new low for Pixar’s three-day openings. Before, that title belonged to “The Good Dinosaur” and “Onward,” which both debuted to \$39 million. Previous Pixar lows were “The Good Dinosaur” and

“Onward,” which both debuted to \$39 million.

“Elemental” was greeted positively by critics, with a 76% on Rotten Tomatoes, and audiences (A CinemaScore). AP’s Jake Coyle wrote that it’s “probably in the lower half” of the Pixar cannon but “sincere and clever, with a splash of dazzle,” it, “comes closer to rekindling some of the old Pixar magic than some recent entries.” Including \$15 million from 17 international territories, “Elemental” launched to \$44.5 million globally.

“Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse” was a very close third, in its third weekend, with \$27.8 million. Sony is projecting that its domestic total will have reached \$285 million through Monday.

It’s possible, Dergarabedian said, that Spider-Man’s formidable holding power—bolstered by reviews and word of mouth—ate into “Elemental’s” launch. Both are also rated PG.

“Transformers: Rise of the Beasts” dropped a steep 67% in its second weekend, adding \$20 million to take fourth place. “The Little Mermaid” settled into fifth place with \$11.6 million in its fourth weekend.

- “The Flash,” \$55 million.
- “Elemental,” \$29.5 million.
- “Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse,” \$27.8 million.
- “Transformers: Rise of the Beasts,” \$20 million.
- “The Little Mermaid,” \$11.6 million.
- “The Blackening,” \$6 million.
- “Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3,” \$5 million.
- “The Boogeyman,” \$3.8 million.
- “Fast X,” \$2 million.
- “Adipurush,” \$1.6 million.

Friend’s hygiene habits are left high and dry

**DEAR ABBY:** I invited a friend to spend the weekend with me on my parents’ boat. She insisted that she must shower twice a day, as that is her usual routine. She said she can’t wake up without a shower, and needs to shower to be clean at the end of the day. I believe showering twice a day is excessive. Even showering once a day isn’t necessary unless someone has been working or exposed to dirt.

I have been criticized for “judging” her hygiene habits. They say she may suffer from a germ phobia. I have known her more than 10 years, and she has worked as a professional cleaning lady. I don’t think she’s a germaphobe but high-maintenance and vain.

I suggested she could wash up with face cloths and wipes, and shower once a day. The lake is so clean you don’t need to shower after a swim. (For anyone who doesn’t understand why I’m questioning this, it’s because fresh water on a boat is in limited supply.)

Should a guest be asked to comply with the host’s requests, or must the host comply with the guest’s unusual demands? How should this be handled?

GO JUMP IN THE LAKE

**DEAR GO JUMP:** Gracious hosts will do whatever they can to ensure their guests are comfortable and provided for. Gracious guests will comply with whatever “house rules” are instituted by their hosts. In your case, this should be handled

by not inviting this particular friend to any more overnights on your family boat.

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** Since my husband’s death eight years ago, his family has continued to include me in their family gatherings. We didn’t have children together, but I have three adult sons from a previous marriage.

A year ago, I started dating someone, but broke it off after six months. Six months later, I received an invitation to a very nice wedding. I live about 45 minutes away from the venue. Night-time driving is not an option for me, and the neighborhood is no place for a woman to maneuver alone. My invitation was for me and a guest. I was delighted that I could possibly ask one of my sons to escort me.

The mother of the groom (my sister-in-law) texted me to explain that the “guest” on my invitation was meant to be for the gentleman I stopped seeing six months prior and not my son. She had never met this gentleman, and my son is appropriate in appearance and manner.

My feelings are seriously hurt. I feel an invitation that includes “and guest” should not be at the discretion of the sister-in-law. I was also hurt that the decline of my “guest” was via text rather than a conversation. What are your thoughts?

DISAPPOINTED IN MISSOURI

DEAR ABBY

BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN  
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

**DEAR DISAPPOINTED:** Oh my. I think what your sister-in-law said was rude, insensitive and ridiculous. “And guest” is a thoughtful, inclusive gesture to ensure that the invitee isn’t left sitting alone at a table when couples are off dancing. I remember my late Aunt Eppie (Ann Landers) once telling me that if she received a solo wedding invitation, she would send her regrets.

■ ■ ■

To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)







# Marlins complete sweep of Nationals to move 10 games over .500



**WASHINGTON (AP)—** Jesús Luzardo

earned his first victory in three career starts at Nationals Park and the Miami Marlins beat Washington 4-2 Sunday to complete a three-game sweep and move 10 games over .500 for the first time in 12 years.

The Marlins improved to 41-31 and are off to the second-best start in franchise history through 72 games, behind the 1997 team that was 43-29 and went on to win the World Series. Miami, 10 games over .500 for the first time since May 28, 2011, has swept the Nationals in three of its four trips to Washington since the start of last season.

Lane Thomas homered and Patrick Corbin (4-8) took the loss for Washington, which has lost three in a row and 11 of 13. The Nationals are an NL-worst 27-43 and are a season-high 16 games under .500.

Luzardo (6-5), who was drafted by Washington in 2016, allowed five hits and two runs over six innings while striking out five. Andrew Nardi picked up his second save.

## **PADRES 5, RAYS 4**

**SAN DIEGO (AP)—**Manny Machado drove in two runs, Joe Musgrove worked six solid innings and Fernando Tatis Jr. and catcher Austin Nola teamed up to punch out a potential tying run at home plate as San Diego beat MLB-leading Tampa Bay to take the three-game series.

The Padres were ahead 5-4 in the top of the eighth inning when Tatis threw a near-strike to Nola at the plate to get Manuel Margot, who was trying to tie the game by scoring from second base on a single to right field by Christian Bethancourt.

Musgrove (5-2) lasted six innings, allowing two runs and six hits with one strikeout. Josh Hader worked a scoreless ninth for his 18th save.

Machado drove in solo runs in the third and fifth innings on a sacrifice fly and a single.

Rays starter Yonny Chirinos (3-2) went 4-2/3 innings, giving up five runs, three earned, and six hits. Randy Arozarena had three hits in the loss.

## **GUARDIANS 12, DIAMONDBACKS 3**

**PHOENIX (AP)—**Josh Naylor had four hits and three RBIs, and Cleveland pounded out 16 hits and avoided a three-game sweep.

The Guardians cruised through the series finale, scoring two runs in the first, three in the second and six more in the fourth for an 11-1 lead. Right-hander Tanner Bibee (3-2) gave up three runs and seven hits in five innings, striking



Miami Marlins catcher Nick Fortes, left, and relief pitcher Andrew Nardi celebrate after a baseball game against the Washington Nationals at Nationals Park, Sunday, June 18, 2023, in Washington.

out six and walking three.

Steven Kwan scored four times and drove in three runs. Myles Straw, Will Brennan, Amed Rosario and Tyler Freeman all had two hits.

## **REDS 9, ASTROS 7**

**HOUSTON (AP)—**Rookie Elly De La Cruz and Jake Fraley drove in runs in a three-run 10th inning as Cincinnati extended the longest active winning streak in the majors to eight games.

It's Cincinnati's longest string of wins since winning 10 straight in July 2012.

Nick Senzel started the 10th as the automatic runner and moved to third on a sacrifice bunt. The Reds took the lead when Senzel scored on an error. Seth Martinez (1-3) plunked Jonathan India before an RBI single by De La Cruz made it 8-6. Fraley grounded out to score another run and pad the lead.

Alex Bregman cut the lead to 9-7 with a two-out RBI single in the bottom of the inning. But Alex Young retired Kyle Tucker for his first save.

## **ANGELS 5, ROYALS 2**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)—**Shohei Ohtani and Mike Trout hit back-to-back home runs, helping Los Angeles defeat Kansas City in the finale of a three-game series.

It's the sixth time this season, and 28th overall, that Ohtani and Trout have homered in the same game. Jared Walsh led off the ninth with a solo home run.

## **ORIOLES 6, CUBS 3**

**CHICAGO (AP)—**Adam Frazier and Jorge Mateo each had an RBI single in Baltimore's three-run sixth inning in a win over Chicago.

Anthony Santander homered for Baltimore, and Ramón Urias drove in two runs. Austin Hays had three of

the team's 14 hits.

The Orioles, winners of six of seven when they arrived in Chicago, dropped the first two of the weekend series by a combined score of 13-5.

Baltimore right-hander Dean Kremer (8-3) struck out seven while working five innings of three-run ball. Félix Bautista pitched a perfect ninth for his 19th save in 23 chances.

## **BRAVES 14, ROCKIES 6**

**ATLANTA (AP)—**Eddie Rosario homered twice and drove in six runs, and NL East-leading Atlanta beat slumping Colorado to complete a four-game sweep and run its winning streak to six games.

Michael Harris II went 5 for 5 and scored three times for Atlanta, which erased a 5-0 deficit. Harris and Ozzie Albies each hit a three-run drive, helping the Braves increasing their major league-leading total to 126 homers. Matt Olson and Orlando Arcia each had two of the team's 18 hits.

Charlie Morton (6-6) was charged with three earned runs and five hits in five innings in the win.

## **RED SOX 6, YANKEES 2, 1ST GAME RED SOX 4, YANKEES 1, 2ND GAME**

**BOSTON (AP)—**Alex Verdugo scored on a catcher's interference to break a fourth-inning tie and then scored again in the fifth after reaching on a dropped pop and Boston completed a doubleheader and series sweep of New York.

Verdugo also had an RBI double off the Green Monster to lead the Red Sox to a win in the day game, a make-up of Saturday's rainout.

It's the first time the Red Sox have swept the Yankees in a doubleheader since Sept.

17, 2006, and the first time they did at Fenway Park since since July 31, 1976.

Brayan Bello (4-4) struck out a career-high eight batters in the nightcap, allowing one run and four hits and three walks in seven innings. Kenley Jansen pitched the ninth to earn his 15th save.

In the first game, Connor Wong and Verdugo hit consecutive RBI doubles with two outs in a three-run sixth inning. Adam Duvall and Justin Turner each added an RBI single for the Red Sox.

Gleyber Torres hit two-run homer in the first inning for New York.

Nick Pivetta (4-4) worked three perfect innings of relief with four strikeouts for the victory. Michael King (1-3) took the loss.

## **CARDINALS 8, METS 7**

**NEW YORK (AP)—**Nolan Arenado's second homer of the game was a tiebreaking shot in the ninth inning that lifted St. Louis past New York for a rare series win.

Arenado hit a two-run homer in the first inning for the Cardinals, who blew an early 5-1 lead before the third baseman homered off Adam Ottavino (0-3) with one out in the ninth. Paul DeJong and Jordan Walker also homered while Paul Goldschmidt had a two-run double and Brendan Donovan added an RBI single among his three hits for St. Louis.

## **TIGERS 6, TWINS 4**

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—**Spencer Torkelson and Kerry Carpenter hit back-to-back homers in a five-run fifth inning, powering Detroit past AL Central-leading Minnesota.

Carpenter and Andy Ibáñez each had three hits for the Tigers, who won three of four in the series after begin-

ning June by losing 11 of 12. Brendan White (1-0) tossed two scoreless innings for his first career win.

Carlos Correa had two hits for Minnesota, which had won four of five before faltering in the series against Detroit. Twins starter Louie Varland (3-3) allowed six runs and nine hits in 4 1/3 innings.

## **BREWERS 5, PIRATES 2**

**MILWAUKEE (AP)—**William Contreras hit a game-tying RBI single, Raimel Tapia followed with a sacrifice fly that plated the go-ahead run and Luis Urias added insurance runs with a two-RBI single—all in the eighth inning—as NL Central-leading Milwaukee completed a three-game sweep and sent Pittsburgh to its sixth straight loss.

Trevor Megill (1-0) pitched a scoreless eighth to notch the win. Devin Williams pitched a perfect ninth to record his 12th save in 13 attempts.

Bryan Reynolds hit his eighth homer of the season, a two-run shot in the third inning for Pittsburgh's first runs since the seventh inning of Friday night's 5-4 loss. Reliever Dauri Moreta (3-2) took the loss.

## **RANGERS 11, BLUE JAYS 7**

**ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—**Corey Seager and Ezequiel Duran each had four hits, and Texas pounded out 15 hits in a win over Toronto.

Seager drove in three runs and Duran scored three times as Texas erased a 6-0 deficit on its way to the win in the rubber game of the weekend set. Leody Taveras added three hits and three RBIs, including a tiebreaking single in the fifth inning and a two-run homer in the seventh.

Whit Merrifield and Bo Bichette each had two RBIs for Toronto in its sixth loss in nine games. George Springer had two hits and scored two runs.

Blue Jays right-hander Chris Bassitt was charged with five runs, three earned, and seven hits in 3 2/3 innings. Nate Pearson (4-1) took the loss.

## **GIANTS 7, DODGERS 3**

**LOS ANGELES (AP)—**LaMonte Wade Jr. and Luis Matos each had two RBIs and San Francisco completed a rare rivalry series sweep on the road against Los Angeles.

It was the sixth time San Francisco swept Los Angeles in a three-game series at Dodger Stadium since the teams moved to California

in 1958. It's the first road sweep for the Giants in LA since Aug. 20-22, 2012.

Logan Webb (6-6) allowed two runs in seven innings, and the Giants won their seventh straight game.

Tony Gonsolin (4-2) gave up a career-high seven runs in 5 2/3 innings for the Dodgers, who have lost four of five.

The Giants were coming off a 15-0 win on Saturday night. It was San Francisco's largest margin of victory over their NL West rival since a 19-3 victory on Sept. 14, 2013. It also matched the worst home shutout loss in Dodgers history, which came in 1898 against Pittsburgh when the team was based in Brooklyn.

## **PHILLIES 3, ATHLETICS 2**

**OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—**Kyle Schwarber opened the game with his 20th home run and added an RBI single as Philadelphia completed the series sweep with its sixth straight victory.

The A's lost their fifth in a row after a six-game win streak and were swept in a series for the 10th time this year.

Former Athletic Cristian Pache doubled twice and scored two runs for the Phillies. Aledmys Diaz homered for the A's against reliever Matt Strahm. Oakland scored another run in the eighth off Jose Alvarado before Yunior Marte struck out the side in the ninth and recorded his first save.

Zack Wheeler (6-4) pitched six shutout innings, allowing six hits and two walks with four strikeouts.

## **MARINERS 5, WHITE SOX 1**

**SEATTLE (AP)—**Julio Rodríguez hit a two-run double, rookie Bryce Miller pitched seven crisp innings and Seattle overcame a dominant performance by Lance Lynn in beating Chicago.

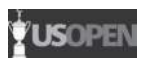
Lynn (4-7) matched a franchise record with 16 strikeouts in seven-plus innings, but Miller was terrific and Seattle got clutch hits from Rodríguez and Jarred Kelenic.

Rodríguez's third-inning double put the Mariners up 2-0. The 22-year-old Rodríguez got his 15th steal of the season in the sixth, joining Fernando Tatis Jr. as the only players in major league history to hit 40 homers and steal 40 bases in their first 200 games.

Miller (5-3) allowed one run and four hits in his second straight win. He struck out six and walked none.



# Clark plays big and becomes a major champion at the US Open



LOS ANGELES (AP)—

In the city of stars, Wyndham Clark had his own script in mind in the U.S. Open.

In front of him was Rory McIlroy, one of golf's biggest talents who looked ready to end his perplexing nine-year drought in the majors. Next to him in the final group Sunday was Rickie Fowler, a Southern California native who returned from a three-year slump and was poised to finally win his first major.

Clark carried a message from his late mother — “Play big,” she always told him — and the belief he could compete with anyone on any stage.

No stage was bigger than a U.S. Open on the edge of Beverly Hills. That's where Clark delivered clutch saves, a signature shot that gave him control and the steady nerves to hold off McIlroy and become a major champion.

“I feel like I belong on this stage,” Clark said after closing with an even-par 70 for a one-shot victory over McIlroy. “Even two, three years ago when people didn't know who I was, I felt like I could still play and compete against the best players in the world.”

He won in only his seventh start in a major—his previous best was a tie for 75th — and it came six weeks after he captured his first PGA Tour title at Quail Hollow.

“It's gone faster than I thought as far as just starting to do some stuff mentally that I've never done before, but I feel like I'm one of the best players in the world,” Clark said “Obviously this just shows what I believe can happen.”

The final act was two putts from 60 feet on the 18th hole at Los Angeles Country Club, and the 29-year-old Clark pumped his fist when it settled a foot away. He tapped that in for a par, maybe the easiest shot he had all day.

Left in his wake was a col-

AP  
Wyndham Clark holds the trophy after winning the U.S. Open golf tournament at Los Angeles Country Club on Sunday, June 18, 2023, in Los Angeles.



lection of big names.

Scottie Scheffler, the No. 1 player in the world, couldn't catch him. Neither could British Open champion Cameron Smith. Fowler was playing in the final group of a major for the third time. Clark was playing in the final round of a major for the third time, and the previous two occasions he was done in time for lunch.

Clark let loose his emotions at the end, looking to the blue sky in tears and covering his face with his cap as he sobbed on the green.

He thought about quitting golf a decade ago when he struggled with the loss of his mother, Lise, to breast cancer. She was who kept him steady in good times and bad. He was thinking about her all week for all kinds of reasons.

“My mom lived in LA for a few years and I've had some people come up to me and show pictures of my mom

when they knew her back in her 20s and early 30s when she was living here,” said Clark, who was born in Denver. “So it was kind of a special vibe all week being here in LA. My parents got married at Riviera Country Club. I have some roots a little bit in this area.

“All I really wish is that my mom could be here and I could just hug her and we could celebrate together. But I know she's proud of me.”

For McIlroy, it was more disappointment in his quest to end nine years without a major.

He opened with a birdie and didn't make another the rest of the way. McIlroy played a final round that typically wins a U.S. Open—16 pars, one bogey. Just not this one.

Even as Clark showed signs of cracking during the rugged closing stretch, McIlroy missed fairways and didn't

give himself any reasonable birdie chances.

It was similar to St. Andrews last summer at the British Open, when he hit every green and couldn't buy a putt. Instead, he'll face more questions about when he'll win another major.

“When I do finally win this next major, it's going to be really, really sweet,” McIlroy said. “I would go through 100 Sundays like this to get my hands on another major championship.”

Scheffler missed too many putts early on the back nine and needed help from Clark and McIlroy that never arrived. He also closed with a 70 to finish third, a month after a runner-up finish in the PGA Championship.

Fowler set a U.S. Open record with 23 birdies, but just like so many other majors when he had a chance, he was in reverse before he ever

got going — three bogeys in the opening seven holes. He never made up the ground and shot 75.

This day belonged to Clark, who showed remarkable poise and self-belief, not to mention an extraordinary short game and a fairway metal he won't soon forget.

Already with a two-shot lead, he was a yard away from an easy birdie on the par-5 eighth when his approach hit a steep bank of the barranca to the left. Barely able to see his golf ball, Clark took a whack and the ball advanced a few inches deeper into thick grass.

He hammered it again, this time over the green, 70 feet away down a firm and scary putting surface. He chipped that to 3 feet to escape with bogey.

“That up-and-down was the key to the tournament,” he said.

More such shots followed. On the par-3 ninth, he was on the bank of a bunker and chipped away from the flag, using the slope expertly to get it to within 7 feet for another big save. And then he clipped a pitch from a tight lie left of the 11th green to 4 feet for par.

The signature shot was his fairway metal from 282 yards on the par-5 14th to 20 feet that set up a two-putt birdie, giving Clark a three-shot lead with four to play.

But he made the only bogey of the day on the par-3 15th, then found a bunker left of the 16th fairway and whacked his hand on his putter when he missed a 7-foot par putt. His lead down to one shot, he got up-and-down from left of the 17th green to keep the lead.

The USGA allowed thousands of fans to circle the fairway short of the 18th green with so few grandstands, creating a big theater for Clark's finish.

Fowler, still chasing his first major, returned to the 18th green to hug Clark.

“I went back in there and just said, ‘Your mom was with you. She'd be very proud,’” Fowler said.

Clark finished at 10-under 270 and along with \$3.6 million—his second such cash prize in the last six weeks—he moves to No. 2 in the Ryder Cup standings.

Smith shot 67 to finish fourth. Tommy Fleetwood became the first player with two rounds of 63 in the U.S. Open and finished in a tie for fifth with Fowler and Min Woo Lee (67). Fleetwood also shot 63 at Shinnecock Hills in the final round of 2018.

That was a fitting finish in one respect—a U.S. Open that had the lowest 18-hole scores on Thursday (Fowler and Xander Schauffele at 62) ended with the lowest scoring average for 72 holes (71.76) in U.S. Open history.

By TIM REYNOLDS  
AP BASKETBALL WRITER



Bradley Beal will soon be part of the NBA's newest Big 3, after the three-time All-Star agreed Sunday to be traded to the Phoenix Suns and team up with Kevin Durant and Devin Booker in a trio with serious offensive firepower and championship aspirations.

The Suns agreed to send Chris Paul, Landry Shamet and a package of future second-round picks to Washington, according to a person with knowledge of the negotiations. Some pick swaps will also be part of the trade, said the person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition

## Source: Bradley Beal being traded to Phoenix by Washington

of anonymity because the deal is pending league approval.

The biggest domino to fall was this: Beal waived his no-trade clause to be sent to the Suns, agent Mark Bartelstein said Sunday. There is a chance that the trade could eventually include a third team, particularly if a club wants to acquire Paul, but the basic framework is done.

ESPN first reported details of the trade.

For Phoenix, a franchise that had a 2-0 lead in the NBA Finals against Milwaukee in 2021 before falling in six games, the motivation is obvious—to win a title. The

Suns will be different this coming season; Frank Vogel is succeeding the fired Monty Williams (who is now in Detroit) as coach, Paul will no longer be the starting point guard who is still searching for his first championship, and Durant and Booker will have a training camp together for the first time.

It's also the start of something new, and probably needed, in Washington. The Wizards have finished with a losing record in each of the last five years, missing the playoffs in four of those, and haven't won a postseason series since 2018. The Wizards

will pick eighth in Thursday's draft, and Kyle Kuzma and Kristaps Porzingis could decide later this week to become free agents by declining player options moves that seem likely.

The deal was struck less than a week after Denver topped Miami in the NBA Finals, and with the Heat having also spent the last few days working with the Wizards on the possibility of acquiring Beal.

It also begins a week where Victor Wembanyama will be the No. 1 pick in the NBA draft Thursday by San Antonio—and where

more players could be on the move, since trades frequently happen on draft night.

It is the second major acquisition for owner Mat Ishbia in Phoenix. He landed Durant for a massive combination of players and first-round draft picks just days after formally taking over the Suns in February.

There are three active players in the NBA with at least 500 games played while averaging at least 22 points per game. Phoenix now has three of them in Beal, Durant and Booker. They will make about \$130 million combined next season, meaning

the Suns will pay a ransom in salary and tax for this title shot.

Starting with 2017-18—Beal's first All-Star season—he's averaged 26.0 points per game. That's 10th-best in the NBA over that span.

He's been an All-Star in three of those six seasons and made All-NBA in 2020-21, when he finished second in the scoring race for the second consecutive year.

Beal is entering the second year of what could be a five-year, \$251 million contract; the last of those years is at his option and would pay him \$57.1 million. Over the next four years, he's owed about \$207.7 million.



# Gacayan, Aparte rule 1st stage of Hell of the Marianas

By MARK RABAGO

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Roland Gacayan and Mike Aparte were the fastest in two wheels in the first stage of the 2023 Hell of the Marianas held last Sunday.

Gacayan topped the road bike division of the 35-kilometer course from Banzai Cliff to La Fiesta, to 1-Million Gallon Tank, to Bird Island, and back to Banzai Cliff in 1:15:35.

Two seconds off his pace was runner-up Joel Buco in 1:1:37, while Renren Gaviola completed the Top 3 in 1:15:48.

The 38-year-old Townhouse Furniture staff said he was just fortunate to have outsprinted Buco to the finish line.

"The road was wet and perilous. I'm just happy that all my hard work in practice paid off," adding that he and Buco actually caught up with Gaviola toward the end after the youngster broke away from



Aparte



Gacayan

the main pack."

The La Union, Philippines native said aside from the wet road conditions, he also found it a challenge to match Buco and Gaviola in the climbs as the two are known for their prowess in pedaling uphill.

Gaviola said he trained 3-4 days a week more or less 60 kilometers a day in the runup toward the first stage of the Hell of Marianas.

Aparte, for his part, took apart the mountain bike field after crossing the finish line in 1:25:09. A distant second was Bryan Ytac in 1:30:43, while Angeles Alvarez was third in 1:38:40.

Hailing from Cagayan de Oro, Philippines, Aparte said it was a surprise win for him since he hardly practiced.

"Despite not really training because of my work commitments I really did my best to win the race. Racing is my passion even when I was still in the Philippines before," he said.

The Pacific Islands Club Saipan staff dedicated his

win to his family, adding that "they're my inspiration to win every race I compete in."

Northern Mariana Islands Cycling Federation official Jay Diyco said a total of 26 bikers took part in the initial offering of the Hell of the Marianas series.

The second part will be on Aug. 20 and will encompass the Suicide Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, Banzai Cliff, and Radar route, while the third and last part will be on Oct. 15 and will start at Radar before going to Suicide Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, Banzai Cliff, Suicide Cliff, Bird Island Lookout, Grotto, then returns to Banzai Cliff.

The results of the age divisions in both the road and mountain bike divisions will be published in tomorrow's issue of *Saipan Tribune*.

The 2023 Hell of Marianas series concludes with the 100-kilometer 2023 Hell of the Marianas Century Cycle on Dec. 2.

For more information, contact NMI Cycling Federation president Vince Seman at nmi-cycling@gmail.com.

## LEE

From Page 20

kept their 14-7 lead because the game went on longer than expected—with the score tied from 22-all until 29-all.

But finally, the Lee twins caught a break as Chang and Po erroneously returned a volley too hard and hit out-of-bounds, for

a 30-29 first set and the crowd erupted in cheers as the set finally came to a merciful end.

The second set wasn't any easier as both teams have played each other long enough by now to know what their moves are.

The crowd went "oooh" and "ahhh" at each return and each point from either side because at this point,

it could still go in anyone's favor. Chang and Po tried their hardest to push for a deciding third set as the game was another close one that had the crowd at the edge of their seats.

In the end however, the Lee twins stopped Chang and Po in their tracks at 22-20 and took the victory before the game could go on any longer.

After the match, in an interview with their interpreter, the 25-year-old Lee twins said that they just tried to relax through the whole game. "We've been playing here for the past two weeks, so we just tried to relax—lose or win—just put it all out on the court, everything we've trained for."

When asked what happened to their lead in the first set and how it came to be a back-and-

forth battle, they said "during the deuce, we were nervous. But, since they all play for the same team, we kind of know what our opponents are going to do, so we just tried to make every shot as well as we could from there."

The men's finals was another upset as No. 6 seed Takuma Obayashi of Japan beat South Korea's Jeon Hyeok Jin, 21-19, 21-16.

Obayashi took his momentum from the close first set and managed to maneuver the second set away from a tired Jin. Jin landed good points and tried to make a comeback in the second set but was shutdown by Obayashi's speed and deceptive tactics.

Results of the mixed pairs and women's doubles will be posted in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

## BROTHERS

From Page 20

winning is never easy. Teaming up with my brother is very special to me and always will be. I will always appreciate and cherish these times as we are not getting younger and nothing is given."

As for the course and weather conditions, Sasamoto said last Saturday in Kagman was perfect golf weather.

"Lots of sunshine and lots of wind is perfect for golf. I think the biggest factor in us

winning was our determination and the will to finish. To birdie our last three holes and win by one is a great example of how much we wanted this win and the concentration it took to pull it off. But I give a lot of credit to my brother because his putting was phenomenal and kept our round going in the early stages. It was a great win for us and hopefully many more to come."

In the double peoria competition, Peter "Dung" Tenorio and Brian Camacho ruled the roost with a net score of 68.2, followed by Ricky Sablan and

Joe Sablan Jr.'s 68.6 and Sylvio Ada and Nick Reyes' 69.

Tenorio said them winning the double peoria category was more due to Lady Luck smiling at them as much as their skill on the Kagman golf course,

"Purely luck that was based on the random [drawing of holes]...it was a tough day [to play golf] because the wind was blowing and the pin location was very hard. We just played the best we could. Our score was OK but it was a little bit difficult for me," said Tenorio.

Camacho agreed with his partner that the conditions were really tough, especially the hot weather. He also attributed their win to the randomness of the double peoria format.

Winners of the gross and double peoria categories went home with \$800 for first place, \$650 for second place, and \$500 for third place.

In the optional play category, Zhi Yun Li, Mizutani, Father James Balajadia, Jay Santos, and Joe Sablan won closest to the pin in their respective holes and were \$150 richer, while Ben Duenas was deemed the most aggressive golfer and also pocketed \$150.



MARK RABAGO

Peter "Dung" Tenorio, second from left, and Brian Camacho, third from left, topped the low double peoria division of the 14th Annual Saipan Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament last Saturday at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort. Also in photo are Chamber executive director Kim Camacho, left, Chamber vice president Joshua Wise, right, and Chamber director Ron Smith.

## BALL

From Page 20

points and second was Gracie Mendiola at 35 points. In the Junior Boys, Tyler Andrew was first with 60 points and Jermaine Salas was second with 30 points.

For Ball, who was also in the V6 women's team for Marianas Outrigger Club, the race was good, competitive, and satisfying as she only trained six times in the past year. Her training consisted of going out of the reef so "I learned to train in different weather, when there's big waves, learned which is good for steering, and about wind direction."

In her V1 race, she said she competed against two juniors and three other women paddlers and that "we tried our hardest to paddle the farthest away from everybody. It was really competitive and I like it, especially for the youngsters. We see their competitive attitude and it gives a good challenge. I wanted them to have more training and it's giving them more encouragement to beat me next year."

The 38-year-old Ball, who is

also a weightlifter, represented Team NMI in the 2022 Pacific Mini Games, was asked what sport she will choose to represent in this year's Pacific Games in the Solomon Islands. She said "I don't know which one but I'll try my best in both sports. If I can make it to weightlifting, I'll do that, but if there's an option for me, I'd like to do both. But if not, then at least one."

Calma, who has been paddling for 23 years, said about winning the finals, "hard work always prevails—just put in time."



LEIGH GASES

From left, open men's V1 first place Carter Calma, second place Maverick Itibus, and third place Jason Tarkong pose for a photo after the finale of the Northern Marianas National Paddling Sports Federation Va'a V6/V1 Slalom Race series last Saturday in Kilili Beach in Susupe.





Marlins complete sweep of Nationals to move 10 games over .500.

**PAGE 17**

# Saipan Tribune Sports

20 TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2023

Gacayan, Aparte rule 1st stage of Hell of the Marianas.

**PAGE 19**



SAIPAN TRIBUNE

## Lee twins power past top seeds in men's doubles



Chinese-Taipei's Fang-Chih and Fang-Jen Lee in action against top seed Ko-Chi Chang and Li-Wei Po in the second set of men's doubles of the TakeCare Saipan International 2023 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium Sunday afternoon.

LEIGH GASES

By LEIGH GASES  
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REPORTER

Chinese-Taipei's wonder twins Fang-Chih and Fang-Jen Lee toppled top seeds Ko-Chi Chang and Li-Wei Po in the men's doubles of the TakeCare Saipan International 2023 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium Sunday afternoon.

The Lee twins, who are the No. 3 seed in the men's doubles of this qualifier, took on their countrymen and put up a long and valiant fight to start off the championship round.

It was definitely a fight to the finish as they extended the first set to 30 points when both sides took turns in landing points. It was a game of hot potato as the Lee twins would

land a point, then Chang and Po would land one as well.

The cat-and-mouse chase went on for more than 15 points when they were tied at 16-16 after the Lee twins had a good lead early on and went back and forth from there with both duos unable to shake the other off.

The Lee twins wished they  
**See LEE on Page 19**



LEIGH GASES

Chinese-Taipei's Fang-Chih and Fang-Jen Lee pose for a photo with their trophies after winning the men's doubles of the TakeCare Saipan International 2023 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium Sunday afternoon.

## Ball, Calma paddle to first place in V1



LEIGH GASES

From left, open women's V1 first place Pipit Ball, second place Erryne Dasalla, first place in the junior girls 19 Vinalynn Oronigo, and second place Gracie Mendiola pose for a photo with their medals after the awarding ceremony of the Northern Marianas National Paddling Sports Federation Va'a V6/V1 Slalom Race series last Saturday in the waters off Kilili Beach in Susupe.

By LEIGH GASES  
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REPORTER



Pipit Ball and

Carter Calma were the fastest in the Slalom V1 after the finale of the Northern Marianas National Paddling Sports Federation Va'a V6/V1 Slalom Race series last Saturday in the waters off Kilili Beach in Susupe.

In the women's division, Ball's fastest time is 26:13.470, while Calma's fastest time is 22:44.630.

For the open women's V1, Ball also claimed first place overall from the total points of their three races from last May 20, June 3, and the finals with 60 points.

Second was Maria Ornes with 30 points and Erryne Dasalla came in third with 25 points.

For the open men's V1, Calma was first again with 60 points; Maverick Itibus came in second with 40 points; Jason Tarkong was a close third with 35 points; Richard Sikkell and Joe Weaver were tied in fourth place with 13 points; and Justin Andrew was fifth place with 11 points.

In the junior 19 girls V1 race, Vinalynn Oronigo's fastest time is 28:27.010, while in the junior 19 boys, Tyler Andrew's fastest time is 24:11.830.

First place in the junior girls was Oronigo with 55

**See BALL on Page 19**

## 'Brothers' top low gross; Tenorio, Camacho win double peoria

By MARK RABAGO  
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR



Joe "Kamikaze" S. Camacho and Joe C. Sasamoto won the low gross competition of the 14th Annual Saipan Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament last Saturday at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

The blockbuster duo combined for a gross score of 11-under 61 to edge the 10-under 62 of the father-and-son pairing of J.J. and Justin Atalig and third place Harry Nakamura and Paul Kaipat, who registered a 6-under 66.

While technically cousins, Camacho and Sasamoto consider themselves brothers as the former's father and the latter's mother were siblings and the former's mother and the latter's father were also siblings.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Joe "Kamikaze" S. Camacho, right, and Joe C. Sasamoto pose with their low gross champions certificate a couple of days after topping the division of the 14th Annual Saipan Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament last Saturday at the LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

Camacho said winning with Sasamoto was a fulfillment of a lifelong dream for both of them.

"It really meant alot to both of us for teaming up and win-

ning. It's always been our goal to win together and what mattered the most besides winning was the time spent playing as 'one' even though I didn't really show a lot of emotions but

deep down inside it felt great and so fulfilling," he said.

The LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort golf pro said their familiarity with each other's golf game showed in the golf course and that's why they won the low gross category.

"It's actually the chemistry between us that made all the difference, especially playing together. If there's no chemistry between team players, then there is no team. I think I wanted to win the Chamber tourney as much as he did and we both made it happen," said the 62-year-old Camacho, who is one year Sasamoto's senior.

Sasamoto shared his cousin's sentiment, saying that "the win was great and even better getting it done with my brother. It's been our goal to get a win together and to do it against a very strong field was very rewarding. There's a lot of great players here and

**See BROTHERS on Page 19**